



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## INSPECTION REPORT

### HOLY ROSARY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Part of the Pope John XXIII Multi-Academy Company

Hickman Avenue, Wolverhampton, WV1 2BS

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Inspection dates 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016  
Reporting Inspector Bernadette O'Shea

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Academy
Age range of pupils	4-11 years
Number on roll	192
Appropriate authority	Board of Directors
Chair of Governors	Father Craig Fullard
Telephone number	01902 878 440
E-mail address	holyrosaryprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	May 2012
DFE School Number	336 3302
Unique Reference Number	104373

**Headteacher** Mrs Helen Peters

Previous inspection: 3

This inspection: 4

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DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



## Evidence

The inspection was carried out by 1 Diocesan Inspector. The focus of the inspection was on the effectiveness and use of the school's self evaluation of religious education (RE) and Catholic life. To validate the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation of teaching and learning, the inspector observed 3 full RE lessons with the assistant headteacher. In addition, the inspector completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time. She held meetings with the Chair of Board of Directors, Vice-Chair of the Holy Rosary Primary Academy, the assistant headteacher and a support headteacher from the MAC. She observed music with the whole school by a visiting musician (Onelife music) and undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching in RE, the presentation of the Catholic life of the school, and pupils' behaviour. She looked at a range of evidence related to the school's self evaluation such as RAISEonline, the development plan and teachers' planning. Alongside the validation of school self evaluation, the inspector gathered evidence about assessment and moderation which will be shared with other diocesan schools.

## Information about the school

Holy Rosary is a smaller than average sized Catholic primary academy serving the parish of St Joseph in Wolverhampton. It is situated in a deprived area of Wolverhampton. The number of Catholic pupils is currently 22%. The proportion of ethnic minority pupils is below average. Sixty-five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is well above the national average. The number with special needs and/or disabilities is above national average. Attainment on entry is below the national average overall. At the time of the inspection the headteacher was absent on sick leave.

## Main Findings

- Holy Rosary judges its collective worship and Catholic life as requiring improvement to be good. This judgement is based on the school's self-evaluation processes that have been validated during the inspection for collective worship and Catholic life.
- Self-evaluation of RE is judged by the school as requiring improvement to be good. However, the inspection found that through observing the quality of teaching, evidence in books and speaking to pupils, the progress in RE is very limited because of insufficient attention to the outcomes of the lesson, a lack of understanding of assessment criteria and limited coverage of the Diocesan RE strategy.
- Holy Rosary is part of Pope John XXIII MAC (Multi-Academy Company) and therefore has three primary schools and a secondary school that are willing, and have the capacity, to support and guide the school in the future.
- The Board of Directors and Governors of the academy are fully aware of the urgency to improve the provision for its pupils both rapidly and with expedience. Issues surrounding recruitment of senior leadership and main scale staff are at the centre of board discussions with action planning reflecting the board's effort to

move the school's quality of leadership and teaching and learning forward at an accelerated rate.

- Governors and Directors of the MAC have recently formulated improvement plans, which will be monitored by the Board of Directors, ensuring the leadership will be held to account for the impact it is making on outcomes for all pupils, in all year groups and across all learner groups.
- Prayer experiences are planned for and pupils take part readily. They have assembly every Monday morning currently based on the virtues being studied. The pupils contribute towards the collective worship by participating in writing prayers but do not plan their own Liturgies i.e. for younger pupils.
- The school is inclusive of all irrespective of gender, ethnicity, ability or disability, culture, faith or socio economic background. British Values are implicit within the Catholic Values and Virtues work that underpins the ethos of the school.

## **School self-evaluation**

### **Catholic Life**

- Catholic virtues and the values are being developed throughout the school in line with the diocesan guidance with a whole school policy for studying a different virtue each half term. Pupils can talk about the virtues learnt so far and can demonstrate their understanding. They presented a virtue tree which enabled them to talk confidently about those studied and how they can apply these to their own lives and living out the Word.
- The school fosters a sense of service to others as reflected in the charitable acts they engage in to support CAFOD, Macmillan, Good Shepherd Ministry (Harvest Festival Gifts).
- The MAC are currently working together to agree a Mission Statement for the joint organisation.
- There is evidence that the school promotes love of neighbour, a sharing of gifts and a message of justice, hope and peace. This is found in the class display books and the pupils readily acknowledge this, 'Jesus was sent to tell everyone God's message of love and peace at Christmas'.
- The school has an ethos that is characterised by the spirit of forgiveness, 'we should help others as much as possible even if they hurt us'.

A whole school Lenten Retreat day focused on the Year of Mercy culminating in a reflective prayer service at the close of the day enabling pupils to express their own understanding of being forgiven and how to forgive.

- The sacramental programme is parish based. Book scrutiny, lesson observation and pupil interviews did not reveal that this is supported by the RE teaching in school in Y3 or Y6/Y5. To do this would ensure that pupils fully understand the

sacraments they are receiving and why, as well as supporting their formation as they grow as people of God.

- A process of formal reflection focusing on Catholic Life by all key stakeholders does not, at present, enable leaders to move forward. This process needs to be undertaken so as to give clear direction and purpose for future actions. As a formal systematic review and evaluation of Catholic life is not in place, leaders are missing opportunities which will impact upon any purposeful improvement to pupil outcomes.
- Governors acknowledge that due to the lack of senior leadership in the school, focused training is required regarding identifying the school's strengths and areas to improve in respect to its Catholic character. Shared action planning is planned to develop the spiritual, moral and vocational development and other outcomes for pupils as well as mission and communion linked closely to rigorous evaluation.
- Pupil interviews revealed that they do not have opportunities to say what they wonder about but a comment from one pupil saying, 'I wonder what would have happened if Judas had not betrayed Jesus' led to a good discussion between the group reflecting their ability to listen well, put forward their ideas and make links to their own understanding and their faith.
- The ethos of the school was very welcoming. Pupils demonstrated their care for one another through their respect, good manners and politeness.
- Collective worship is evaluated as requiring improvement to be good. Pupils participate readily and show respect for each other. They recognise a number of prayers, but as the children progress through the school this becomes more limited. Closer links with the parish have resulted in the parish and school working more closely together. The school has supported enterprise events in the parish and both the school and the parish use their newsletters to promote each other's events.
- Key Stage 1 classes have set liturgy times which have been revised with the parish priest to ensure more participation and involvement of the pupils.
- Reflective times are built-in to the school practice and pupils are able to comment upon these: 'we have a little quiet time to consider our actions and whether we can be better people' and 'we are able to think about God'.
- Parents are invited to collective worship times such as school assemblies and Masses. Parents interviewed all said that they had attended and stated that they thought they were very prayerful services.
- Evaluations of prayer areas in classrooms were evident in the Faith file but not evaluations of collective worship services. The school does not currently plan its collective worship ensuring the balance of coverage, progression of prayer and that the four key elements of Liturgy are followed -Gathering, Listening, Responding and Going Forth.

## **RE Attainment and Progress**

- The school has introduced an assessment process since autumn 2015. This is a step forward towards formally identifying attainment and progress in RE. Although the introduction has taken place, far more CPD is required in order for the teachers to understand the assessment criteria and relate this to the pupils intended outcomes when planning.
- Portfolios of assessed work did not reflect the Archdiocesan attainment and progress levels across the school. The school would be greatly supported by having moderation of work and a portfolio of evidence to measure pupil outcomes against.
- Pupils make limited progress in RE. Children are not asked questions in either their lessons or planned activities that enable them to deepen and further their faith and understanding. Much of the work in books and observed in lessons is focused purely on recounts (retells) of Scripture. This is particularly so in upper Key Stage 2 where progress is severely limited. There is little evidence of pupils being asked to reflect on meaning. As a consequence, the progress in RE is insufficient and is below diocesan expectations.
- Teachers' weak subject knowledge acts as a barrier to developing the learning of the pupils.

### **Quality of Teaching**

- Lessons observed were variable. Where the quality of teaching was observed to be satisfactory the teacher was able to elicit responses from pupils that were thoughtful and reflective enabling them to learn from their religion. However, this was not furthered or reflected in the written work which was planned only as a recount.
- Unsatisfactory teaching was observed which did not promote the pupils' learning, progress or enjoyment of RE leading to poor outcomes for pupils as a result of inappropriate expectations. The majority of pupils did not understand what they had to do and the misunderstandings were not picked up by the adults in the room.
- Much of the RE observed focused more on the personal and social development rather than the formation of faith and beliefs.
- Scrutiny of books across the school revealed work of limited quality, length and presentation; a large majority of retells / recounts in various forms such as diaries, newspapers, letters. Marking of pupils' work was inconsistent and, in most year groups did not further or deepen the children's learning or faith journey. Scrutiny of planning did not match what was in the books - far more being planned than being taught.
- Discussion with the senior leader identified that closer monitoring of the curriculum would enable fuller coverage, higher expectations and at least expected progress. Coverage of the RE curriculum is unsatisfactory.

### **Improvement Planning**

- A description of the improvement planning process, through discussion, implied that the ownership of whole school priorities is not shared by staff. Governors are aware that the improvement planning processes, if they are to have impact on outcomes, must be shared and have recently agreed the strengths and areas of improvement.
- Review of the recommendations from the last RE Inspection has revealed that these still need to be improved upon. Rapid, focused strategies and initiatives are required to be implemented with focused impact statements, to bring about securely moving to good.

### **Governors/Directors**

- Governors and Directors acknowledge that the school requires support to improve in Catholic Life and there is a requirement for substantial improvement in the teaching of RE.
- As a MAC, the governors and directors are in focused discussions to ensure that the other schools can provide sustained, high quality leadership and management support to Holy Rosary as well as sourcing independent professional support to validate the school's current and future practice relating to assessment outcomes for pupils.
- They have an understanding of the strengths and areas to improve and are proactive in their bid to ensure that the school improves rapidly with rigorous strategies planned for the leaders and managers of the school, and their impact, holding the school to account.
- Neighbouring MAC schools have been supportive and further actioning of this focussed support is taking place. This professional support from the MAC schools, if applied with consistency and rigour, with current leadership accepting the support, should enable Holy Rosary to improve. A further school is also involved in supporting the school as part of a leadership and management and quality of teaching programme. This support has been hard to evaluate as it has not been as regular as originally thought due to long term absences of the headteacher.
- It is acknowledged that recruitment to senior posts in the school has recently been, and still is, a challenge. Whilst the recruitment process is taking place the governors must be in a position to ensure that the school is closely monitored and that significant senior leadership and management training is rapidly introduced holding the school to account for the outcomes of pupils.

### **Recommendations**

The Governors should now seek:

- To introduce a robust systematic strategic plan to thoroughly monitor and evaluate all aspects of Catholic life, ensuring that all stakeholders (staff, governors, pupils, parents) contribute to the process and that the actions taken have an impact on the school to ensure it is at least good.

- To rapidly improve the standards of RE in the school so that it is at least good by ensuring that:
  - there is an RE lead who can monitor, support, evaluate and challenge current and future practice and standards in RE;
  - teachers receive a full CPD package regarding assessment and moderation of RE standards of attainment, expected progress measures and key skills to be developed in RE;
  - teachers' subject knowledge is developed thoroughly so as to deepen their understanding of the religion and faith resulting in the appropriate ways to question and further pupils' learning and understanding.