



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection Report

OUR LADY'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Part of the All Saints Catholic Collegiate Multi Academy Company
Watkin Street, Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 4NP

Inspection dates: 29th-30th November 2018
Lead Inspector: Rose Brookes

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: **Good**

Catholic Life: Outstanding

Religious Education: Good

Collective Worship: Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection: *Good*

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is a Good Catholic school because:

- This happy school is very well led by the dedicated headteacher. She is supported by an experienced senior leadership team, who offer continual support to staff.
- All staff are totally committed to the school's mission of enabling every pupil to achieve their full potential.
- The staff, including the home school link worker, provide exceptional care for the pupils and the parents know that they will receive support when it is needed.
- Both staff and governors provide excellent faith models for all the pupils.
- All teachers have a performance management objective that is linked to pupil progress in Religious Education. This has supported the professional development of individual teachers and has helped to raise standards in Religious Education.
- The sacramental preparation of pupils is inspiring. It provides catechesis for both pupils and parents, which enables everyone to grow closer to God.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary during all acts of worship, where they participate enthusiastically.

It is not yet Outstanding because:

- Pupils need to take responsibility for preparing and leading different forms of worship with a greater degree of independence throughout the school.
- Pupils need a better awareness of the traditional prayers of the Church, which are appropriate for their age.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to record their deeper understanding of Religious Education and how they can apply this understanding to their lives.
- Not enough pupils exceed age related expectations for Religious Education.

FULL REPORT

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Pupils need to be given more frequent opportunities to lead Collective Worship across the school.
- Pupils need to be taught the appropriate traditional prayers for their age group.
- Pupils need to be given more opportunities to record work that shows greater depth in their understanding of Religious Education.
- Increase the number of pupils who exceed age related expectations in Religious Education.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

- Our Lady's Catholic Academy is a happy, welcoming and inclusive school with an outstanding Catholic ethos that is firmly based on the Gospel values.
- All staff are totally committed to the school's mission, which states that 'By growing together in faith, hope and love, Our Lady's is a place where children are cherished and challenged to achieve their full potential.' This Catholic Mission enables pupils to quickly grow in confidence and to be able to talk about their faith.
- The school is led by a dedicated headteacher. She is very well supported by an experienced senior leadership team, who offer continual support to staff, parents and pupils. They are outstanding faith models to all.
- The school's home school link worker upholds the dignity and respect of all members of the school community, through the support he gives to families and pupils who are in need. He contributes significantly to the outstanding pastoral care of school.
- Our Lady's Catholic Academy provides many opportunities for pupils to quickly develop in confidence, pride and maturity. Pupils of all ages accept a variety of responsibilities, which include a head boy and girl, a MAC mission group and a Religious Education leadership team.
- Pupils willingly take a leading role in activities that promote the school's Catholic Life and mission, both within school and in the local community. They are involved in many types of fundraising. During the inspection, pupils spoke very knowledgably about providing support for the Gingerbread Society and the Donna Louise Trust.
- The Mini Vinnies group, supported by a member of staff, have led some of the school's many fundraising activities, which all pupils have generously contributed to. For example, they introduced a reverse Advent calendar for the homeless

where pupils were taught to give instead of take. Opposite the school is a night shelter for the homeless. The Mini Vinnies led a 'sock of love' appeal, where they filled socks with essential items for the homeless. They have also had a significant role in designing a beautiful school prayer garden.

- Staff are excellent role models because they enable pupils to see how the Gospel values need to be lived out. For example, pupils spoke with admiration to the inspectors about how some members of staff help in a local homeless night shelter.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of vocation. They can talk about how they need to live out their vocation in school and at home.
- The school participates in an annual Anti-Bullying Week. As a result, pupils are aware of the consequences of their own actions. They understand we are all equal as children of God and recognise the importance of showing forgiveness and compassion to our neighbour.
- The pupils are culturally very diverse and bring a richness of their own to the school. Gospel values and virtues, promoted in the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile (CSPP), are reflected in the openness, trust and respect which are key features of Our Lady's school community.
- The behaviour of nearly all pupils at Our Lady's is exemplary and they show respect for each other. They are grateful for the great care they receive from a very dedicated staff, who they respond to very positively. Pupils know that they will receive continual support from staff, which enables them to learn about the love of God.
- The school environment greatly enhances the school's mission and identity. The Religious Education leadership group regularly monitor displays to ensure that they celebrate the Church's liturgical year.
- Pupils actively participate with enthusiasm in a variety of high-quality religious experiences and retreats. For example, upper key stage 2 pupils go on retreat to Alton Castle and lower key stage 2 take part in a pilgrimage to Harvington Hall. Through these experiences, pupils deepen their relationship with God and learn about their Catholic heritage. Pupils in Years 4,5 and 6 attend a retreat at St Thomas More Secondary School during different liturgical seasons throughout the academic year.
- The parish priest knows the needs of the local community and the school. Last year, in partnership with the school, he introduced a new first Holy Communion Sacramental programme. This programme enables the school and parish community to work together to catechise both parents and children. It is planned that this excellent catechesis will also become part of the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Through the MAC, staff are encouraged to develop their own spirituality. All staff in the MAC are encouraged to attend yearly Masses and staff retreats. This has helped staff to deepen their personal relationship with God.
- Provision for relationship and sex education is thorough and developed at an appropriate level for all pupils. It is consistent with the teaching of the Church. This enables pupils to explore feelings and emotions and how they impact on themselves and others.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school.

- School leaders and governors share a strong commitment to the Church's mission in education and are very successful in developing the outstanding Catholic Life of

the school. This has meant that the spiritual and moral development of the pupils is always given the highest priority by school leaders and governors.

- The headteacher and her senior leadership team are totally dedicated to the Catholic Life of the school. Together they regularly monitor all areas of Catholic Life and are continually open to the new challenges which society gives them. A strength of Our Lady's is its ability to recognise and respond to the needs of the local community in Fenton and the surrounding Potteries. As a result, the school is supported by many local community agencies.
- Governors are knowledgeable and pro-active in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the Catholic Life of the school. They formally record their findings and they continually offer appropriate challenge. Because of this, governors have an excellent knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- The headteacher cares about the staff and ensures that they are continually developed spiritually, morally and professionally by senior leaders, the parish priest and the MAC. Consequently, Our Lady's is a happy school where all staff are highly committed to its mission and the Catholic Life of the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of Religious Education.	Good
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	Good
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.	Good
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.	Outstanding

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

- Pupils enter Nursery and Reception classes with very low levels of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. However, due to good teaching, they quickly begin to make progress. This means that by the end of foundation stage most have made outstanding progress and over half the pupils are working at expected levels.
- Our Lady's has a high rate of pupils moving in and out of the school. In response to this, the school has put in place some very good induction and welfare programmes. These programmes help pupils to quickly settle into school.
- The evidence from lesson observations and work scrutinies confirms the school's judgment that attainment continues to be good for most pupils and for some pupils it is above expectations.
- The school has rightly identified that there is a need to increase the numbers of pupils exceeding age related expectations. Consequently, this is currently a focus on the school development plan.
- This year, one of the staff performance management targets has focused the achievement of key groups in Religious Education. This has led to an improvement in the Religious Education progress and attainment of these pupils and is a strength of the school.
- As the monitoring of Religious Education assessment has become more rigorous, the analysis of vulnerable groups has become a focus of data discussions. As a result, gaps in learning for these pupils are quickly identified to ensure that their progress is similar to that of other pupils.

- Both boys and girls enjoy Religious Education. They speak enthusiastically about how they enjoy different ways of learning in Religious Education. Pupils' experience a wide variety of learning activities. This enables nearly all pupils to succeed and to learn how to live out the Gospel values. Consequently, pupils' behaviour in lessons is exemplary.
- The use of an app, where pupils film their class mates art, drama, dance and singing in Religious Education, provides a very good link between school and home. As a result, parents/carers can see and even participate in their child's Religious Education learning.
- Pupils have an awareness about different faiths and cultures. When interviewed, pupils said that they respected each other's faith. However, the pupils would like the opportunity to visit different places of worship.
- The team of teachers, some of whom are new to teaching, have been very well developed by senior leaders to have good Religious Education subject knowledge. They all enjoy teaching Religious Education and are excellent faith role models to pupils.
- The planning of lessons is effective across the school and makes good use of diocesan resources. Planning is reviewed by teachers and takes account of previous learning by setting appropriate learning objectives. As a result, pupils are engaged in their learning.
- The teaching of Religious Education is good overall with some outstanding elements. Senior leaders have accurately identified where and when teachers have needed support and they continually receive professional development. This has led to improved standards in Religious Education.
- Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support pupils with specific needs. This enables all pupils to learn and concentrate well.
- Teachers manage time well to secure good learning in Religious Education lessons. During the inspection, the pace of lessons was good, this enabled pupils to stay focused and motivated.
- However, there is a need to match work more closely to pupils' abilities. This will enable more able pupils to be further challenged and less able pupils to be better supported.
- Pupils' work in their Religious Education books shows imagination, independence and an ability to interpret symbols. During lessons observed as part of the inspection, pupils could reflect and integrate these ideas into their own lives. However, pupils need to be given more opportunities to demonstrate this greater depth of Religious Education understanding in their Religious Education work.
- One of the strengths of Our Lady's is the way teachers use open questions to assess pupils' learning in Religious Education lessons.
- When marking pupils' work, teachers consistently challenge pupils to answer a question about how they can apply their Religious Education learning to their life. Consequently, most pupils can apply their Religious Education knowledge to their own lives.
- The Religious Education curriculum is based on the diocesan scheme, 'Learning and Growing as the People of God,' and follows its recommendations in terms of planning and assessment.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

- Our Lady's has a very experienced and highly effective Religious Education subject leader. She continually works collaboratively with the very dedicated headteacher to ensure that thorough Religious Education monitoring procedures are in place. As a

result, senior leaders and governors know the school's Religious Education strengths and areas for development.

- Teachers new to teaching in a Catholic school and teachers that need support receive very good professional development from the experienced and highly skilled Religious Education Leader.
- Frequent moderation of teachers' judgements in Religious Education assessment takes place within the school and between the schools in the MAC, including the secondary school.
- Standards of Religious Education are monitored and evaluated by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and Religious Education subject leader and they are frequently reported to and discussed with governors.
- The governors fulfil their statutory and canonical responsibilities regarding Religious Education. They ensure that the requirements of the Bishops Conference are met in terms of curriculum time for Religious Education and the priority that Religious Education is given in the school. Governors have an active role in monitoring standards in Religious Education. Findings from this monitoring are very well documented by the Religious Education link governor and regularly shared with the governing body.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality of Collective Worship.	Good
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	Outstanding
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	Good
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.	Outstanding

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship. The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.

- During the celebration of Mass and school assemblies, all pupils conduct themselves with extreme reverence and respect.
- The Religious Education pupil leadership team frequently monitor prayer areas throughout the school to ensure that they have the correct colours and displays to match the Church's year. Consequently, pupils have a good understanding of the liturgical year.
- The school has created a beautiful prayer room that enables pupils to experience different forms of prayer. The Mini Vinnies frequently renew the display in this sacred space, where they meet regularly to pray. The Legion of Mary also meet regularly in the prayer room to pray the rosary with pupils, who attend voluntarily from all classes. This has helped pupils to have a good knowledge of the rosary.
- Pupils know that they need to talk to God in their lives. They can confidently talk about what prayer means to them and they know what the different types of prayer are. They also know their routine daily prayers. However, pupils from Year 2 onwards have little knowledge of the diocesan recommended traditional prayers for their age group.
- During the inspection, Year 6 pupils led a Year 1 class in Collective Worship. There was a beautiful prayer focus and the pupils sang joyfully and acted reverently and with respect. They used a PowerPoint presentation showing reflective images about

hope which supported the theme of the Wednesday Word. Although the pupils had planned this reflective liturgy with a level of independence, key stage two pupils' confidence would benefit from more regular opportunities to lead prayer across the school.

- Every classroom has a prominent prayer focus that is regularly monitored by pupils. Staff work hard to ensure that Religious Education displays support pupils' worship and Religious Education.
- During the inspection, pupils sang beautifully at a whole school Mass and read the readings and bidding prayers very well. They behaved reverently and each Year 6 pupil accompanied their prayer partner (a reception child). They were all excellent role models for the younger pupils.
- The headteacher regularly leads acts of Collective Worship about the message of the Sunday Gospel. A very reflective key stage 2 assembly took place during the inspection, where pupils were able to pray in silence and reflect on the Gospel. The pupils were all very attentive, answering questions about how they could apply the Gospel reading to their lives. They sang the hymns beautifully and prayed reverently.
- Every week, pupils take home the Wednesday Word. This resource provides a very good opportunity for families to pray together and to grow closer to God.
- As part of their child's sacramental preparation, parents are encouraged by teachers and the parish priest to read and actively participate in the weekend parish Masses. This initiative is very successful because it enables parents to worship regularly with their children.
- Staff have opportunities to worship with other schools in the All Saints Catholic Collegiate (MAC). These opportunities include Masses, retreats and prayerful professional development opportunities.
- Year 7 pupils from St Thomas More, Secondary School act as prayer partners to Year 6 pupils from Our Lady's. This provides excellent links between the two schools, allowing the high school pupils to be good role models for Year 6.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

- Collective Worship is promoted and led by the headteacher and the Religious Education subject leader. They ensure that all staff are professionally developed to have the confidence and knowledge to plan and deliver Collective Worship.
- All staff, parents, pupils and governors are involved in monitoring and evaluating Collective Worship. This has included the Religious Education pupil leadership team interviewing pupils about prayer. This monitoring has led to effective planning for school improvement.
- Teachers have evaluated pupils' planning of Collective Worship. However, this evaluation needs to lead more clearly to actions for improvement.
- The Religious Education Link governor formally records his monitoring of Collective Worship and provides action points for improvement. The governors are well informed about the provision of Collective Worship.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	140287
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
<i>This inspection was carried out under canon 806 of Canon Law and under Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act.</i>	
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	226
Appropriate authority	Board of directors
Chair	Paul Williams
Headteacher	Karyn Oakley
Telephone number	01782 235385
Website address	http://www.ourladysca.org.uk
Email address	office@olca.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2013

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- Our Lady's Catholic Academy is a one-form entry Catholic primary school with a nursery serving the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Fenton in Stoke-on-Trent.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 31%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is significantly above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and /or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is lower than the national average. An increasingly large number of EAL pupils are arriving at the school without any English.
- Attainment on entry is well below the national average.
- Since the last inspection a number of changes have taken place. In November 2013, the school became Our Lady's Catholic Academy, part of the All Saints Catholic Collegiate Multi Academy Company (MAC). The MAC consists of four primary schools and a secondary school). The academy committee has undergone significant changes including the appointment of a new chair in 2017. The school has appointed a new headteacher and deputy headteacher. A new parish priest was appointed in Sept 2016.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors – Rose Brookes and Bernadette Corbett.
- The focus of the inspection was on the impact, quality and leadership of the school's provision of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- The inspectors observed teaching across eight Religious Education lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All these lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic Life, the impact of Religious Education teaching on their learning over time and their experience of Collective Worship.
- Meetings were held with the Catholic Life and Religious Education link governor and two other governors, the headteacher, the Religious Education subject leader, the parish priest and the home and school link worker.
- The inspectors attended a whole school Mass, whole school and class Collective Worship.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, Analyse School Performance (ASP) data, the school development plan, the Religious Education action plan, teachers' planning and learning journals.