



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

St Gregory's Catholic Academy

Part of the All Saints Catholic Collegiate Multi-Academy Company

Spring Garden Road, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST3 2QN

Inspection date : 15th & 16th March 2017

Reporting Inspector Ms Julie-Anne Tallon
Assistant Inspector Mrs Mary Daniels

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Academy
Age range of pupils	3 - 11 years
Number on roll	448
Appropriate authority	The Board of Directors
Chair of Governors	Ray Chadwick
Telephone number	01782 235340
E-mail address	office@stgca.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 st & 22 nd February 2012
DFE School Number	861/3488
Unique Reference Number	140297

Headteacher **Margaret Yates**

Previous inspection: Outstanding

This inspection: Outstanding

Evidence

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan inspectors.
- The focus of the inspection was on the quality, leadership, and impact of the school's provision of Catholic life, collective worship, and religious education (RE)
- The inspectors observed teaching across 9 lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of these observations were conducted jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with governors and directors, the executive head teacher and the head of school, as well as a parent group.
- The inspectors attended a whole school Mass, an assembly, collective worship in classrooms 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.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents including the school self evaluation, data and analysis about pupils' attainment and progress, RAISE on line, the development plan and evidence journals.

Information about the school:

- St Gregory's is a larger than average primary school serving the parish of St Gregory's in Stoke-on-Trent.
- The percentage of baptised Catholics is currently 56%.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The number of pupils with SEND is broadly in line with the national average
- Attainment on entry is below the national average.
- St Gregory's is part of a Multi-Academy Company (MAC): All Saints Catholic Collegiate that consists of one secondary and four primary academies.

Main Findings

- The overall provision for Catholic life, religious education and collective worship is outstanding at St Gregory's Catholic Academy.
- There is a powerful commitment by the whole school community to the understanding that God has called each of us by name.
- Evangelisation is a strength of St Gregory's, which is underpinned by the whole school living and promoting the Gospel values. Examples of this can be seen in the testimonials displayed in school and on the school website.
- The RE subject lead works across the MAC driving school improvement. They ensure that monitoring and provision of RE are excellent. This results in outstanding outcomes for the pupils.
- The school's provision for prayer and worship is outstanding. Children are given a wealth of opportunities for prayer, meditation and reflection.
- Both the inspirational executive head teacher and the head of school are passionate and unwavering in their commitment to the Catholic life of St Gregory's, this commitment in turn is reflected in leaders at all levels.

- Governors are exceptionally well informed and all governor reports start with the mission of the MAC and the reports are strongly linked to the school development plan (SDP). All link governors' subject reports include evidence of the mission statement in action.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

Catholic life, collective worship and spiritual, moral and vocational development: provision and outcomes.

- The Catholic life, collective worship and spiritual, moral and vocational development: provision and outcomes of the school are all outstanding.
- Catholic life is clearly the first priority of the MAC; staff are supported and developed within the MAC to fully contribute to the Catholic ethos of their schools. Leadership and succession planning is strong and embedded.
- The code of conduct for adults in school is displayed around the building, and is centered on promoting all in the image and likeness of God and promoting Gospel values. As a result, the relationships between all adults is a strength of the school.
- New pupils and staff to school are supported with an induction programme centered on the Catholic faith. Consequently, all who learn and work within the school understand and fully embrace its Catholic mission.
- An all pervasive Catholic ethos is evident as soon as you enter the school environment.
- Staff and pupils take great pride in the stewardship of God's creation. Pupils show respect to each other and to their environment, this is evidenced in the positive choices that pupils make transitioning around school.
- There is a very strong commitment to the understanding that God has called each of us by name, and as such each person is valued and unique to God. The importance of calling pupils and adults by their given name is embedded across the whole school.
- The celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of the school. Consequently, the school makes it a priority that all pupils have the opportunity to celebrate Mass in the parish church each term.
- Whole-school Mass is celebrated regularly in the school hall, where the installation of a holy water font outside the hall focuses pupils on the transition of the hall to a place of worship. This has contributed to the reverent behaviour of pupils and the respect that the whole school community gives to the Mass.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in and contribute to a wide range of worship. They initiate and plan assemblies for their own school and across the MAC. Inspectors saw evidence of pupils planning and leading their own assemblies which have also been shared across the MAC.
- RE lessons often include prayer and sometimes end with a simple liturgy. As a result, pupils are able to link the knowledge and skills they acquire in RE lessons to their own spiritual development.
- Pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain as they are encouraged to understand and respect other faiths; pupils with different religious beliefs are assisted and supported in their prayer in very practical ways by the school.
- Parents value the school leaders' commitment to the Catholic life of the school and are proud to celebrate the good reputation of school within the local community. Parents appreciate and support the discipline within school, which is based on Gospel values.
- Pupil voice is sought regularly and valued by the school. School councillors have worked with school leaders to write their own version of the SDP in child

friendly language; this is proudly displayed around school. This has supported widening the voice of stakeholders in contributing to the school self-evaluation.

- Events in scripture are linked to real life situations and to the teachings of Pope Francis. Pupils respond positively to this and can discuss the importance of scripture in their own lives.
- Pupils have a thorough knowledge about the patron saint of their school and can relate their school motto 'Service before self' to their own lives. Consequently, the behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- A learning mentor works as part of a strong team welcoming new pupils and ensuring they feel safe and secure, reinforcing their understanding that they know they belong to the family of God. Induction for new pupils involves sharing traditional prayers; these are then shared with family to support both adults and pupils in their understanding of the Catholic faith. The strong support provided by St Gregory's staff is evidenced in the fact that parents of pupils, who have transferred to secondary school, still contact the primary school for support.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and Collective Worship

- Catholic leadership is outstanding. The executive head teacher and head of school have ensured that from the very moment anyone enters the school, they are embraced in a positive, welcoming and nurturing Catholic environment.
- Visitors are welcomed into school with the testimonials of staff who have converted to Catholicism through working in school and following the journey in faith programme.
- The range of monitoring of Catholic life and collective worship is extremely comprehensive and the evaluation of this monitoring is robust. There are clear systems in place which present the findings of this monitoring and evaluation directly to the academy mission and strategy committee. As a result, the local academy committee is secure in its knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- There is a Catholic life working group comprised of parents, pupils and staff which contributes to the monitoring and evaluation of Catholic life in the school.
- Improvements have been made as a result of this monitoring, demonstrating that the school has a very strong understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, for example reorganising Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 prayer services so that they meet the needs of all children.
- Governors are well informed by the senior leadership team and have a detailed knowledge of the school ensuring they are able to rigorously monitor and challenge. All curriculum subject reports written by governors link to the Catholic mission of the school. As a result, governors are constantly working to secure, promote and improve the Catholic mission of the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education are all outstanding.
- The quality of learning and understanding in RE is outstanding as observed in lessons, pupils' written work and discussions with children.
- Attainment on entry in RE is below age related expectations. By the time pupils leave Year 6 they have made excellent progress and the majority of pupils are working at or above age related expectations.

- A bespoke assessment tracking system is used very effectively by the leadership team to identify gaps in learning for groups and individuals. This, in turn, is used to inform future school development priorities.
- A 'parent tree' in nursery involves parents and reinforces and supports RE assessment. In order to overcome the difficulty of regularly visiting the parish church with Early Years pupils (due to its distance from the school) role-play areas in Early Years have been recreated to replicate church settings.
- Relationships and Sex Education and family life teaching is appropriate within the teachings of the Catholic Church and responds to the needs of the local community.
- Leadership of RE is inspirational, this is evidenced through the RE subject leader's commitment to supporting other Catholic schools within the MAC. There is a clear strategic vision in RE across both the school and MAC which seeks to share excellent practice and improve outcomes for all.
- MAC moderation for RE is used well to monitor and evaluate standards in RE. It shows parity between RE and other key curriculum areas. Peer reviews between MAC primary schools is embedded, ensuring strong RE practice across all schools. RE leads meet regularly and there is planned Year 6/Year 7 transition to prepare the children for secondary school.
- The Catholic mission of the school permeates all areas of school life. Testimonials displayed and promoted throughout school demonstrate the commitment of a range of stakeholders including the large numbers of staff who have converted to Catholicism over the recent years. The commitment to the Catholic life of the school by all stakeholders is a strength of the school.
- Monitoring and evaluation is evident and inspectors saw evidence of this being used to form current and future SDP.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- To further increase the proportion of pupils who exceed age-related expectations in RE.