



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

ST. JOHN VIANNEY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mount Nod Way, Coventry, CV5 7GX

Inspection dates	8 th & 9 th November 2016
Reporting Inspector	Mr T J Hughes
Assistant Inspector	Mrs R Nash

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 – 11 years
Number on roll	200
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	John Teahan
Telephone number	02476464088
E-mail address	admin@sjv.coventry.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 nd & 3 rd November 2011
DFE School Number	331/3412
Unique Reference Number	103715

Headteacher **Mrs Veronica Gosling**

Previous inspection: 2

This inspection: 1

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



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 5 RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these lessons were conducted jointly with the head teacher.
- The inspectors completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic life, worship, and the impact of teaching on their learning over time.
- Meetings were held with the governors, the head teacher, the subject leaders, the parish priest and 3 recently appointed members of staff
- The inspectors attended a whole school Mass, an assembly, collective worship in Year 1 and Reception, a forest school lesson and undertook learning walks 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's self evaluation, data about pupils' achievement and progress, RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning, pupils' books and learning journals.

Information about the school

- The school is situated in the parish of St. John Vianney and serves the community west of Coventry.
- There is a lower percentage of ethnic minority pupils compared to the national average.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 91%.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils is about half of the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special needs is close to the national average.
- Attainment on entry is in line with national expectations.

Main Findings

- St. John Vianney is an outstanding Catholic primary school, which embraces and reflects its Catholicity in every aspect of school life.
- The Catholic life of the school is Christ-centred, rich and meaningful and assists each child in understanding their vocation in life.
- Collective worship is heartfelt and sincere. It is a priority for the school community, takes place in a variety of forms and is well planned and resourced. Pupils fully participate and are key to the regular spiritual celebrations.
- The school leaders demonstrate their vocation, commitment and vision in such a way that all aspects of the school's provision of RE, Catholic life and collective worship have developed markedly since the last inspection.
- The provision of religious education is an absolute priority for the school.
- As the children progress through the year groups they are nurtured in faith, knowledge and appreciation. As a result, by the time they leave the school their standards of achievement in RE are largely above the expected levels and their responses are spiritually mature.

- The majority of teaching is outstanding. Lessons are very well planned and delivered. Teachers have superb subject knowledge, which they utilise to the full when linking elements of gospel teaching to the lives of the children.
- The pupils are positive and secure and respond to the teaching with confidence. Their work demonstrates the status of RE in the curriculum. The high quality presentation and thoughtful responses have arisen due to the high expectations of all staff.
- Religious education is strategically led with needs of the pupils at the forefront. Training and comprehensive support for newer members of staff have supported all teachers in presenting a consistent and developmental programme of RE. One of the particular strengths of the school is the whole school approach to key aspects of religious education. This in turn enhances the unity and spiritual family of the school community.
- Working closely with the head teacher, the governors have ensured that monitoring is a key feature of self-evaluation. Senior leaders draw upon the contributions of one another to both challenge and develop. The experiences offered to the pupils are at the forefront of their thinking and are continually refreshed through purposeful discussion and regular opportunities to assess the impact of the work of the school.
- From the very start of their life in school, the children are encouraged to be reflective and questioning. In turn they are capable of expressing their views with confidence and bear witness to the importance of faith in their school experiences and how the tasks provided for them promote deeper thinking.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

- The school has correctly judged its Catholic life to be outstanding. Every member of the school family takes their one school rule - 'love one another as I have loved you' – as their guiding purpose in all aspects of their work together.
- Since the last inspection the head teacher and governors have worked diligently to establish and consolidate the ethos. As a result, everyone understands and invests in the elements of Catholic life in the school. Prayer is sincere, worship inclusive and uplifting, the curriculum thought-provoking and spiritual and the school environment bears witness to the living faith of each child and each adult.
- The depth of Catholic life has come about through honest self-reflection, strategic planning and hard work. For example this academic year began with the staff and governors taking a day to consider what being part of a Catholic school community meant for each of them and how their vocation, skills and commitment would contribute to the experiences provided for the pupils.
- There is an ongoing discussion about faith in the school. The pupils have a confident understanding that they can pose questions about religion and there will be consistent, honest response from teachers, senior staff and the parish priest. This gives rise to the pupils embracing faith and in turn, sharing their spiritual connections with one another.
- The quality of the Catholic life of the school has been maintained and developed over the past five years as a result of the continuity of expectations between the governors, parish priest, head teacher and the school staff. Experienced staff have moved onto the governing body and supported the mentoring of new staff members and assisted the school in continuing its mission.
- The school has determined that collective worship is outstanding. This is borne out by a wealth of strong evidence.
- The enhancement of collective worship has been pivotal to the overall growth in Catholic life.

- Whole school Mass is celebrated with reverence and full participation of all. The celebration takes place in church and in class. Worship is enriched by enthusiastic singing and sacred movement. Pupils take a lead in the readings and prayers and parents, parishioners and governors unite to make the occasion the highlight of the week.
- Assemblies are skilfully led by staff and pupils. Assemblies are both reflective and challenging. The spirituality and liturgy are deepened by the pupils' sincere involvement.
- Every opportunity for prayer is maximised. The youngest children in reception class are developing periods of meditation, which help them meet Jesus in their hearts and connect with one another. This initiative is planned to be developed throughout the school to provide another level of prayer for all pupils.
- In the forest school activities the pupils whole-heartedly enjoy the essential outdoor sessions and will take time to pray and reflect, bringing them ever closer to God in a natural setting.
- Collective worship is presented with a high degree of expertise. The school has invested in inspirational resources and training for staff. As a result, Masses and assemblies flow well and the themes of the liturgy are illustrated with meaningful graphics.
- Pupils see it as their vocation to respond to the needs of others. The charities supported by the school have benefited from cash donations collected through fund raising events. The pupils also provide practical assistance in the form of food bank offerings and the work of the 'Mini Vinnies' linked with the St. Vincent de Paul, who give comfort and care to disadvantaged members of the community.
- Excellent behaviour is the norm throughout the school. It is clear that the exploration of Catholic values has had an impact on the conduct and mutual respect evident amongst all within the school family. This is maintained by a clear and well-delivered policy for behaviour, which is understood by all pupils. The children aspire to work hard and do their very best and are rewarded and affirmed as a result. Where pupils have challenges with relationships they are sensitively managed and encouraged.
- The notion of vocation is embraced in an age appropriate way by all pupils. The older children understand and can discuss a 'calling from God' and what that might mean in terms of service and duty. The younger members of the school recognise the gifts that they have been given and the expectation that they will use these to do their best in their work and their support of others.
- The committees, comprising pupils, undertake important work for the school and take their responsibilities seriously. For example the 'Eco Committee' are co-ordinating a series of whole school activities to assist the community in being more environmentally aware in their daily lives by conserving energy, recycling and appreciating global issues. These pupils understand that they are the guardians of God's creation.
- In reflecting on the impact of the Catholic life of the school, the senior leaders have recognised the need to engage more with the pupils, parents and parish. Parent questionnaires and 'pupil voice' evidence has contributed to the school leaders' assessment of this area.
- A key development from the most recent audit has been the way in which pupils and staff regularly lead Mass in the parish at the weekend. As well as being involved in the planning of the liturgy, the children will support the social aspects of weekend celebrations by providing refreshments and information to all who attend. This deeper involvement is inspiring more parents to participate and respond. The governors

recognise the importance of this type of engagement and wish to develop this aspect further.

LEADERSHIP

- The head teacher is an outstanding leader. She has the highest expectations of her staff team and the pupils, and has created a productive spiritual relationship with the parish and other local Catholic schools. The growth and enrichment of the Catholic life is uppermost in all that she plans and manages as the school moves forward.
- The head teacher is clear about service to the children and determined to unlock Christian values and deepen faith. She has developed her staff team so that the delivery of the RE curriculum and collective worship is effective, appropriately planned and is underpinned by the love of God.
- RE is very well led by joint co-ordinators. They routinely monitor and reflect upon the school's provision and adjust and enhance planning, teaching and learning and assessment to achieve high standards. They concern themselves equally with the children's knowledge of and their response to the religious experiences, which are provided in school.
- The governors, including the parish priest, are rigorous in their evaluation of the school's spirituality and promotion of gospel values. They assess provision through learning walks, the scrutiny of pupils' work, attendance at assemblies and through the reports and discussions at meetings with the head teacher and senior teachers.
- The governors challenge and support the senior teachers by bringing their parish and parent perspectives to the debate about the future development. For example, they have tasked the school to build stronger links with parish families by seeking more inspirational ways to deliver the sacramental preparation programme.
- Leadership extends throughout the school and the governors are mindful of the need to build the confidence of less experienced staff; to empower and support them so that they will eventually accede to be school leaders in the Catholic education environment later in their careers.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- The school provides outstanding religious education.
- RE as a subject is prominent in the planned curriculum. It is given equal, if not greater, status to the other core subjects of English and mathematics. All of the key elements for exceptional subject delivery are in place: staff have fine subject knowledge, inventive approaches to learning, excellent and well managed resources and the support of one another where advice and tips for teaching are required.
- Assessment is purposeful and serves to illustrate exactly the pupils' outcomes and what next steps are to be taken. Through a combination of end of unit tests, teacher-pupil discussions and the monitoring of pupils' RE work, all staff have an accurate understanding of the pupils' achievement. As a result, by the time pupils leave the school the vast majority are working above the levels expected by the diocese.
- The pupils enjoy RE lessons and produce very good work as a result of good and outstanding teaching. The teachers guide pupils in maintaining very high standards in their RE books. The presentation, quality of writing and expressions of faith through

pupils' own prayers are impressive. The standards achieved mirror the good results secured in English.

- Sensitive support is given to pupils who have some barriers to learning and tasks are matched to their needs and levels of concentration. Some work is planned so that differentiation is by outcome. On some occasions this means that a cohort of less able pupils do not easily complete their tasks and are prevented from expressing themselves fully in their spiritual response to the faith issues raised in the teaching.
- As a result of the strength of provision in RE, progress in Reception, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is very good for all groups of pupils.
- Mature discussion is at the heart of the pupils' ability to bear witness as to how learning about Jesus affects their lives and how being a pupil at St. John Vianney Catholic primary school will shape their growth in the future. The senior leaders and all classroom staff have invested a great deal of time and trust in pupil discussion and the benefits are tangible in all areas of the curriculum.
- The RE teaching and learning policy is a live and realistic document, which sets out practical approaches to curriculum delivery and skill progression. Thoughtful planning supports appropriate work about vocation, social awareness and sex and relationships education.
- The school engages as a whole in learning about other world faiths. This has been made manifest in a recent Key Stage 2 visit to Singers Hill Synagogue where pupils were able to explore aspects of Judaism and reflect on the common values underpinning all faith. Pupils acknowledged that learning about other faiths broadens their understanding of and respect for all members of the community.
- The RE curriculum has been wonderfully extended to include the parents through 'Inspire Workshops' where pupils work with a family member in creating a seasonal or spiritual artefact. This approach has served to engage more parents and help families share an easy discussion about faith.
- The displays and artefacts around the school reflect the breadth of the RE curriculum. Pupils are inspired to see their work presented with such high status. This motivates them further when approaching new tasks. The quality of art work and illustration is impressive. However, in Key Stage 2 pupils' exercise books, children's own illustrations are not used significantly. The pupils' own RE class work would benefit from a greater level of artistic input.
- A key element to the success of the RE provision is the excellent team-work. The adults who work in the school are united in their mission. This is a community where gospel values influence the promotion of prayer, work and play for every child.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- Plan tasks which better meet the needs of less able pupils so that they are able to make a full response to the spiritual content of the lesson.
- Extend the pupils' high quality illustrations in RE work in class so that a wider range of pupils can express themselves through art.