



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Part of the Lumen Christi Multi-Academy Company

Selly Oak Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham B30 1HN

Inspection date	26 th -27 th June 2017
Reporting Inspector	Mr Paul Nutt
Assistant Inspector	Mrs Bernadette Corbett

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Academy
Age range of pupils	4-11 years
Number on roll	204
Appropriate authority	Board of Directors
Chair of Governors	Mr Matthew Hill
Telephone number	0121 458 2458
E-mail address	enquiry@stjosb30.bam.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 nd -3 rd July 2014
DFE School Number	330/2158
Unique Reference Number	141670

Headteacher	Mrs Jackie Tomlinson
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Previous inspection:	3
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This inspection:	2
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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 4 RE 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, worship, and the impact of teaching on their learning over time.
- Meetings were held with a multi-academy company (MAC) director, the chair of the academy committee, the principal, the vice principal, the leaders of RE and Liturgy, and the parish priest. They also met the school council and the pupils' chaplaincy team.
- The inspectors attended a whole school Mass, a whole school assembly and year group worship. They 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's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, RAISEonline, the school and RE development plans, teachers' planning, and examples of pupils' work.

Information about the school

- The school is an average size, one form entry school which serves the parish of Saint Joseph and Saint Helen in Kings Norton, South Birmingham.
- A significant majority of pupils come from white ethnic backgrounds.
- 88% of the pupils are baptised Catholics.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils attending the school is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is above the national average.
- Attainment on entry is in line with national expectations.
- Since the last inspection, the school has become an academy with a number of new staff including an executive principal (formerly chair of the interim executive board), an internally promoted vice principal, RE Coordinator, SENCO and five new staff members.

Main Findings

- The Catholic life of the school is good, with a number of outstanding elements. Leaders review it regularly, which supports the promotion of an environment for all to develop in faith; however, more regular use of formal procedures for recording and evidencing would better support internal judgements.
- Collective worship is a strong, integral part of the life of the school; pupils are encouraged to prepare and take an active part, which an increasing number do.
- Provision for, and outcomes from RE are good, contributing to the engagement, progress and attainment of pupils. However, more regular and

consistent use of formal systems for monitoring and evaluation would accelerate improvement.

- Led by the personal example of the principal, strong and committed leadership is evident in all areas of the school. Individuals demonstrate their personal commitment to the faith, and there is a collective drive towards continually improving on previous best in all areas of school life.
- Governance is strong and well informed, offering both wholehearted support and forensic challenge.
- The school mission is widely displayed and used throughout the school: there are many examples of charitable works, linking very strongly to the pupils' sense of vocation.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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

- Catholic life at St Joseph's school is strong and inclusive, with prominence given to Catholic Christian values, and to its mission statement:
"To live and learn through our Faith in Christ"
- Pupils take responsibility and contribute constructively in Catholic life beyond routine lessons, as shown in their enthusiastic involvement in works of charity. A voluntary chaplaincy committee has been established, which plans to afford wider opportunities for pupils across the school.
- The ethos of the school and its Catholicity are powerful and all-pervasive. There are a range of statues, artefacts and displays, notably in the entrance areas and school hall. Prayer areas in classrooms are similarly resourced and prominent; they would benefit, however, from a wider range of traditional prayers.
- Pupils are increasingly involved in evaluating the Catholic education at St Joseph's, notably since the arrival of the lead for liturgy. They are invited to offer suggestions, individually and through the elected school council and chaplaincy group.
- They understand religious beliefs and spiritual values, which impact on themselves and others. They show empathy, respect and tolerance towards others at all times; their outstanding behaviour is consistent with the school's mission.
- They understand ideas of service. They are able to articulate clearly the meaning of vocation, and respond readily to the needs of people beyond the school, for example in continuing support for the local B30 foodbank.
- Even the youngest members of the school community are aware of the plight of others around the world, for example Syrian refugees, but also of those much closer to home. They show impressive concern and compassion for the suffering of others.
- At times of collective worship, pupils act with reverence and respect. They engage with Mass responses and prayer, and sing heartily at all opportunities.
- There is a range of formal and informal opportunities for daily worship to make the liturgy of the Church meaningful and engaging. Children take part in weekly whole-school Mass and assembly, class assembly and registration each day.
- Pupils recognise different forms of prayer, including the use of scripture. However, greater prominence could be given to pupils' own prayers and intentions in their class prayer areas.

- There is a thematic approach to the curriculum which is consistent with the Catholic character of the school and the liturgical seasons.
- The school has begun to monitor and evaluate collective worship more systematically, leading to increasingly effective planning for improvement, and raising levels of participation. For example, the whole school Mass celebrated during the inspection was prepared, and much of it delivered, by Year 2.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and Collective Worship

- Strong and dynamic leadership has developed throughout the school, taking a lead from the engaging personal example of the principal. Wholehearted and effective support from the academy committee and enthusiastic acknowledgement of the parents complement the staff's efforts. Strategic oversight from directors is well informed and robust.
- Leaders display a deep commitment, collectively and personally, to the Church's mission in education, which they defend robustly.
- There is clear and strong evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority, along with the spiritual, moral and vocational development of the pupils; inspectors' discussions with them provided clear indications of this.
- Collective worship is well planned and increasingly includes contributions from the pupils. The development of more rigorous and structured processes for evaluation would help leaders to disseminate best practice across all groups and enhance experiences for all.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are able to articulate the school's mission, with understanding and appreciation, and its importance in their personal lives. A whole-school assembly, delivered by the vice principal and anticipating the feast of Saints Peter and Paul later in the week, was well structured and reflected his own personal faith.
- The academy committee holds the school leaders to account for its Catholic life, and they recognise their responsibilities for its evaluation. As a result, staff, pupils and parents have a high regard for the Catholic life of the school.
- Nominated link representatives of the committee visit the school regularly. Visits have an agreed focus; are reported formally; discussed at governing body meetings and actioned where required.
- The school is committed to collaborative working and sharing good practice for mutual benefit. An example of this is the implementation of the class pilgrimage. This was imported from a partner school and adapted for St Joseph's, focussing on a contemporary issue, the refugee crisis.
- Support and professional development for all staff, teaching and non-teaching, are a priority. Targets are both drawn from diocesan priorities and internal identification. Staff meetings are regular and always include an item on Catholic Christian values.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- The commitment and subject knowledge of the RE Coordinator are strong and they are effective in leading and supporting learning and teaching in RE.
- There is a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes, offering a basis for diagnosis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, there is less evidence available on progress.
- Outcomes in RE for most pupils are high; the evidence available suggests that they make at least good progress within and between key stages.
- Four lessons were observed jointly with a member of the senior leadership team; all revealed close agreement with internal evaluations over time.
- Teaching is highly effective and engaging, ensuring that pupils make at least good progress. Staff include a range of strategies and resources, including IT, music and scripture. They are confident to explore a range of exciting and innovative strategies in order to engage pupils, for example the use of "Godly play" in Year 4.
- Teachers are skilled in their planning of learning opportunities, building on prior learning and the preferred learning styles of pupils. Although staff provide thoughtful questioning and feedback for pupils, this could be developed further to provide even greater challenge for the most able.
- There is an agreed proforma for planning. Inspectors were able to see examples of long-term planning, and some teachers' planning, in the assessment folder presented. Planning is comprehensive, consistent and in line with school's expectations.
- Teachers use assessment for learning strategies, both oral and written, very effectively and display secure subject knowledge. Pupils respond well, and benefit from these opportunities. There is scope in some lessons for more extended questioning and inviting opinion about each other's responses.
- Teaching assistants are deployed to good effect, to support individual pupils or groups as appropriate in individual classes. They are included in staff meetings and offered ongoing training opportunities.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to do well. They collaborate in a range of pairings and groupings, and are developing some of the skills of independent learning.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- Further embed the rigorous systems that are in place for monitoring and evaluating RE and Catholic life, in order to maintain accelerated school improvement.
- Challenge the most able pupils through teachers' questioning and feedback.
- Increase the explicit focus on traditional prayers.