



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## INSPECTION REPORT

### ST MARIE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL RUGBY

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Inspection dates 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> April 2013  
Reporting Inspector Brenda Beale

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-11 years
Number on roll	436
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Mr Anthony Fry
School address	Key Stage 2 Site Merttens Drive Rugby CV22 7AF
Telephone number	01788 543636
E-mail address	admin3598@welearn365.com
Date of previous inspection	N/A
DFE School number	937/3598
Unique Reference Number	136507

**Headteacher** Mr Mark Walsh

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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, 2 with the RE subject leader and 1 with the acting headteacher. In addition the inspector completed a work scrutiny and held a discussion with pupils to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time. She held meetings with parish priest who is also a governor. She observed an assembly, a class Mass and a simulated baptism in the church, 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, teachers' planning, and learning walks. Alongside the validation of school self evaluation, the inspector gathered evidence about the role of the RE subject leader, evidence which will be shared with other diocesan schools.

## Information about the school

St Marie's is a large two form entry primary school serving the parish of St Marie, Rugby. The school opened in 2011 when the infant and junior schools were amalgamated. Although one school, it operates on a split site, with Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 in one building and Key Stage 2 in a different building. Both buildings are within easy walking distant of each other and the parish church. Classrooms have been refurbished for Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 following a fire in June 2012. The majority of pupils are White European but almost half come from a range of minority ethnic groups. 31% speak English as an additional language, which is much higher than the national average. Those eligible for free school meals is below average. 12% of the children have additional needs, 3 pupils have a statement and are supported by additional funding. There is a privately run nursery and before and after school care clubs on site. There are several new members of staff in Key Stage 2. At the time of the inspection the headteacher was absent due to ill-health and the deputy Mr Stephen McCarthy was acting as headteacher.

## Main Finding

At the time of inspection the headteacher was absent due to ill-health and the Catholic life of the school was being led by the deputy headteacher and RE subject leader, supported by the senior leadership team and a committed staff. The school rightly judges the overall effectiveness of its Catholic life and RE to be good. Since her appointment the RE subject leader has put in place systematic and rigorous auditing, monitoring and evaluation procedures. In RE the previous junior school was rich in data but little had been done to analyse it and use it to inform planning and development. Last autumn a thorough RE audit of teaching and learning, resources and staff CPD was carried out. Also the Catholic life of the school was carefully reviewed. This led to a 3 year plan for RE comprising three main areas for development: curriculum, the spiritual life of the school and governance. Following a recent section 5 inspection a development plan was devised with priority 4 being focussed on RE and Catholic life. There is evidence that these two plans have already impacted effectively on both the Catholic life of the school and outcomes for pupils in RE. The governing body is a relatively new team but in respect to its Catholic life and RE, governors have an insight, because the parish priest, who is the RE link governor, together with the vice chair of governors, are active within the Catholic life of the school and are able to report their findings to the whole governing body. In light of recent developments the school is likely to sustain its current good improvement.

## School self evaluation

School self evaluation rightly judges that pupil attainment and progress is good in religious education. Using book trawls, pupil interviews and recently analysed assessment data the RE subject leader was confident in stating that at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupil attainment is good. By analysing and comparing the baseline and recent assessments of the current Year 6 it was apparent that progress was also good. Further in depth analysis demonstrated that there was little difference in the progress made by those children with special educational needs or English as an additional language. Self evaluation considers that pupil response to the Catholic life of the school is very good. They have evidence of pupil led fundraising. Through interviews pupils revealed that they highly value the Catholic life of the school. The monitoring of behaviour shows that pupils treat each other with respect and are readily able to forgive and accept forgiveness. Pupil opinion about the Catholic life of the school is valued and is fed into development plans. Although behaviour in Key Stage 1 has always been good, in a recent survey a pupil stated that behaviour in Key Stage 2 is now very much improved. Great attention is paid to monitoring pupils' values and attitudes. Recent audits and careful reflection by the acting headteacher and RE subject leader have led to the accurate judgement that pupil participation in and response to collective worship is good and in some respects it is outstanding.

Self evaluation correctly states that the leaders and governors are keen to improve and develop the Catholic life of the school. Furthermore that the leadership team gives RE a high priority in the school. Within the last year systematic and rigorous auditing, monitoring and evaluation procedures have been put in place. The new self evaluation procedures used in the school, which involves consultation with governors and other stakeholders enable all to be aware of the schools strength and areas for development. RE is very effectively led; monitoring and evaluation is meticulous and thorough. There are a wide range of systems in place for monitoring, analysing and assessing the impact of provision for RE in the school. These include lesson observations, pupil interviews, book trawls, planning scrutiny, assessment of attainment, and learning walks.

Teaching of RE is judged by the acting headteacher and RE subject leader to be predominantly good, with some that is outstanding. This is an accurate judgement which has been reached not only through lesson observations but also judging teaching over time by the quality of work in books, analysing assessment data and discussions with pupils. Improvement is enabled by the quality of feedback, which does not shy away from delivering harder messages about the need for improvement, whilst also offering praise and acknowledgement of best practice. Assessment has moved from being 'data rich, information poor' to being properly analysed leading to improvements in curriculum and planning. These improvements are already impacting positively on teaching and learning. The curriculum is now under regular review and is rightly judged by the school to be good in providing good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral and vocational development. The provision of collective worship is thoroughly audited monitored and evaluated and is judged through self evaluation to be good. The quality, range and opportunities for prayer and worship experienced by the whole community endorse this judgement.

## Overall effectiveness of the school<sup>1</sup>

In Key Stage 1 progress is good but, because on entry the children's knowledge of the Faith is very limited, by the end of that key stage their attainment is average or higher. Standards in RE are rapidly improving across Key Stage 2 becoming more comparable with the standards in literacy. As of January 2013 children with EAL or SEN have been making the same rate of progress as all other groups. Pupils are encouraged to develop as independent learners through questioning, discussion and talking partners. Care is taken to differentiate work for pupils of all abilities. The way in which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is good. Children value and respect the religious tradition of the school and its links with the parish. Pupils learn to respect others, to value justice, understand the difference between right and wrong, and learn to forgive others and ask forgiveness. At Mass pupils are reverent and participate enthusiastically in the celebration of the liturgy. They themselves have commented on the improvement in behaviour at Mass over the last year or so. When Mass is held at church, the presence of parishioners make it a true community celebration. When interviewed pupils talked about their enjoyment of going to Mass at church. They also enjoy class Masses within classrooms as they felt they were more personal and allowed them to pray more openly with their friends. Pupils also like the prayer areas around the school, as a way of sharing their prayers with others. They respond well to the opportunities they are given to participate in open prayer throughout the day and RE lessons. The children enjoy taking part in meditations and are very still as they listen and reflect.

The school mission statement reflects the clear direction of the school's work and ethos. The leadership team of the school has high expectations and is focused on achieving high standards and are rigorous in identifying areas required for the improvement of its Catholic life. There is a shared vision and commitment by all stakeholders, to work together to help pupils reach their full spiritual potential. Governors, although many are new to the role, are committed to shaping, monitoring and evaluating the Catholic life of the school and willing to receive training and guidance. The governing body took a leading role with other stakeholders in formulating the mission statement. The RE governor plays an active role within the religious life of the school. The vice chair of governors has participated, alongside the subject leader, in pupil interviews. The senior leadership team work closely together, ensuring that there is a shared vision and drive for the school. The RE leader demonstrates strong enthusiastic leadership and management of the subject. She is also actively involved in promoting the Catholic life of the school. The RE action plan is explicit and reflects the priorities for improvement. There is an assessment system in place for monitoring, analysing and evaluating the impact of teaching and learning and the curriculum on pupil attainment in religious education. She is aware of the strengths of teaching across the school as well as areas to further improve. There is a wide range of systems in place for monitoring, analysing and assessing the impact of provision for RE.

A high proportion of teaching RE is good with some being outstanding. In Year 1 a very good lesson was observed where children from a Year 2 class, acting as the characters present at the Resurrection and drawing on their prior knowledge, were questioned by younger pupils. This had great impact on the younger children's learning. An outstanding lesson was observed in Key Stage 2 exploring how the lives of Jesus' followers were changed by meeting the Risen Christ. From the very start the children were captivated and enthused by the opening activity and their enjoyment and excitement remained and grew throughout the lesson. Clever use of ICT, the teacher's own knowledge and range and style of teaching strategies promoted exceptionally good learning. Throughout the

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<sup>1</sup> As the quality of the school self evaluation has been affirmed, the judgements in this section of the report conform to those of the school.

school the pupil's excellent behaviour plays a significant part in their learning. The parish priest is actively involved in the teaching of RE and an excellent simulated baptism was observed in the church as part of Year 6 Confirmation programme. Good resources and the quality of the learning environment also impact well on teaching and learning in RE. Through marking and verbal feedback, teachers ensure that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve their work. Assessment procedures, as recommended by the diocese are embedded across the school. Data is plentiful and is now subject to thorough and informative analysis. The curriculum follows the diocesan strategy and is adapted where necessary to meet the needs of individuals and different groups of pupils. The curriculum, takes into account the school's role as part of the local, national and global community. The preparation for Confirmation is done within school with close links with the parish. First Holy Communion is prepared within class and supported by sessions for parents. The teaching and understanding of relationships and sex education is taught within the summer term in Years 5 and 6 through the *All that I am* programme.

There is a regular programme of carefully planned assemblies, school and class Masses and daily prayer in each class. Prayer and collective worship are embedded in the school life. Pupils are taught the traditional prayers of the Church and they write and say their own. Music is used very effectively in acts of collective worship to enhance the prayerful experiences of the pupils. Pupils are given the opportunity to understand different devotions including the Rosary and Stations of the Cross. Pupils also like the prayer areas around the school, as a way of sharing their prayers with others.

The good Catholic life and RE of this happy inclusive school, effectively promotes the pupils' moral, spiritual and vocational development

### **Recommendations**

- Further develop and promote a one school ethos across both sites.
- Ensure consistency throughout the school by sharing good practice.
- Ensure progress is consistently good in all year groups.
- Encourage governors to become increasingly effective in the way in which they discharge their duties through a variety of monitoring activities and governors' professional development.



Diocesan Education Service,  
Don Bosco House,  
Coventry Road,  
Coleshill  
B46 3EA

April 2013

Dear Parents and Carers

**Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of St Marie's Catholic Primary School,  
9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> April 2013**

I am writing this letter to share with you the findings of the diocesan inspection of your children's school. Diocesan inspection now explores in detail the school's own view of itself as expressed in its self-evaluation. For this reason, much of the report is more technical than used to be the case. You are still entitled to have a copy of the full report should you want one and it will be available on the school website or by request from the school office.

The school judged itself to be good in its Catholic life and RE. The inspection found that this judgement is fully justified.

- Your children flourish in this school where the RE and Catholic life is developing rapidly.
- Children make good progress in RE because teaching overall is good and some outstanding teaching was observed during Inspection. The leadership team is very aware of those teachers who need improvement and have good strategies in place to support them.
- Pupils' behaviour and care for each other is very good. Children respond very well to the collective worship which they help to provide. They sing exceptionally well.
- Catholic life is very effectively led currently by the acting headteacher, senior leadership team and the subject leader.
- The recently appointed subject leader is meticulous in her management and development of RE.
- Children do very well because they thoroughly enjoy their learning in RE

To improve further we have suggested that the school should continue to develop and promote a one school ethos across both sites and ensure consistency throughout the school by sharing good practice. Also leaders should ensure that progress is consistently good in all year groups. The new governors need to become increasingly effective in the way in which they discharge their duties through a variety of monitoring activities and governor training.

Throughout the inspection pupils were welcoming, extremely well behaved and able to share their knowledge confidently. They enjoy RE and are proud of their school. We thank you for the part you play, whatever your own faith may be, in supporting the Catholic life of the school and your child's spiritual growth.

Yours sincerely

Brenda Beale  
Diocesan Inspector