



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection Report

St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Weston Crescent, Aldridge, Walsall WS9 0HA

Inspection dates: 13th & 14th February 2018
Lead Inspector: Evelyn Harper

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: **Outstanding**

Catholic Life: Outstanding

Religious Education: Outstanding

Collective Worship: Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection: Outstanding

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship are outstanding.
- The leadership of Catholic Life and Religious Education is outstanding.
- The well-informed governing body demonstrate a deep commitment to the school. They are a regular presence within the school and are very knowledgeable about the day-to-day faith life of the school.
- All stakeholders: the headteacher, teaching staff, support staff, pupils, governors, parents and carers actively live out the mission statement. This is modelled in an exemplary way by the whole school community.
- Pupils speak enthusiastically about their school and take an active role in leading and promoting its mission.
- Pupils respond with sincerity and passion to all aspects of their faith.
- Behaviour and relationships throughout the school are outstanding.
- Religious education is consistently good and often outstanding.
- Almost all pupils, from low starting points, make very good overall progress in Religious Education. The attainment of pupils, in the majority of year groups, is also outstanding.
- The teaching and learning in Religious Education is consistently good and often outstanding.

FULL REPORT

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the governing body's audit of the Catholic Life of the school so that the rigorous system of governor evaluation is well documented.
- Provide tasks for less able pupils that allow them to demonstrate fully their learning during Religious Educations lessons.

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.

- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- The mission statement, "*Recognising and celebrating the presence of God in one another*" is known and understood by the school community. Leaders have ensured that pupils have a deep understanding of the meaning of the mission statement. They are encouraged to sing it in assemblies and during prayer times, this has been very effective in helping them to learn it by heart.
- Pupils fully appreciate and play an active role in the Catholic Life and mission of the school. They feel that St Mary of the Angels is a very special school because it helps them to recognise their duty to others in the world and to treat them as Jesus would want them to. They can articulate many ways in which they do this such as raising money for CAFOD throughout Lent.
- Pupils feel that they have a very active part in the development of the school because teachers trust them to make decisions about ways in which to improve it.
- Behaviour throughout the school is always excellent. Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others. They collaborate exceptionally well during lesson times, each giving others time to speak and share their opinions.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic supporters of all duties throughout their school. They are all given an opportunity to volunteer for activities such as delivering prayer time meditations, assemblies etc.
- Pupils' understanding of vocation is extremely well developed, particularly in key stage 2. They happily told inspectors about the many ways in which they could help God to keep others safe, happy and well. They know that it is their duty to do so and enjoy the many opportunities the school gives them to fulfil this goal.
- Pupils love their school. They are very proud to be members of St Mary of the Angels school and express pride in their own identities and beliefs.
- The staff at this school wholeheartedly support its Catholic Life. They have a strong sense of community and have developed high quality, supportive relationships between all colleagues, support staff and pupils. Together they create a warm and welcoming Catholic community.

- Staff are active role models of mutual respect and forgiveness. This is seen in classes, where staff encourage pupils to ask questions and staff then go to great lengths to answer them in a thoughtful manner.
- Stakeholders at all levels are very clear about the policies and structures which support the strong pastoral care given to pupils. All are thoroughly committed to the development of all groups of learners.

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

- The leadership of St Mary of the Angels is intensely committed to the Church’s mission in education. The headteacher, as the spiritual leader of the school, energises and inspires the whole community in the quest to be an outstanding Catholic school.
- The headteacher is well supported by experienced and knowledgeable governors. The whole school aims to offer each child a strong knowledge of the Faith and teaches them how to become the person that God wants them to be. As a result, the majority of pupils are able to grow in faith and personal strength to achieve this aim.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is a top priority for its leaders. This can be seen in the analysis of school monitoring, which leads to effective action planning for improvement. All improvement priorities are highlighted during school governing body meetings.
- Governors regularly visit and are kept up to date with the school’s evaluation of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship. However, their active participation in its development could be further improved with the completion of the Catholic Education Service governors’ audit of the Catholic Life of the school.
- Governors are a very visible presence in school. They have taken part in learning walks, book trawls and regularly speak with the children. They are therefore able to speak confidently about the work that goes on within the school to promote the Catholic Life. They have contributed to and agree with the school’s self-evaluation report.
- The leadership of the school has developed systems that enable pupils to take on an active role in the development of the Catholic Life and therefore the direction of the school. All pupils are encouraged to take an active role in preparing and leading worship throughout the school. They delight in the Faith, and this has been shown in the way they train other pupils to lead worship.
- The school works exceptionally well with parents. The parents are appreciative of the support they had been given and the impact of this on their families. The high quality of pastoral care shown to the pupils is described by one parent as ‘amazing’. Some parents spoke of the extra support they themselves had been given and how this developed an ethos of ‘kindness, looking after one another,’ which is deeply embedded and sincere.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

- The quality of Religious Education at St Mary of the Angels is outstanding.
- Almost all pupils make good progress and many pupils make outstanding progress in each key stage. They are religiously literate and are very engaged in their learning. During lessons they reflect on their learning in a spiritual and ethical way, confidently asking questions to deepen their learning.
- Learners collaborative well and enjoy working with others to further their own learning. They work hard for a concentrated length of time and show a clear understanding of areas in which they need to improve.
- Assessments show that pupils' attainment is outstanding. This has been sustained over three years. Teacher's assessments are reliable, because they know their pupils well.
- The majority of teaching is outstanding because teachers' planning takes into account the pupils' current knowledge and builds upon this. Assessment is used well to build upon prior learning in order to consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge. Teaching is never less than consistently good and often outstanding.
- Teachers are very confident in the teaching of Religious Education. They use a range of methods to inspire pupils to make very good progress. Lessons are exciting and engaging and result in strong levels of pupil participation.
- Pupils are questioned by their teachers to encourage them to self-evaluate and develop a keen sense of how they are achieving. This gives them the confidence to know how and when to make improvements to their work.
- In many classes teachers' questioning is a very strong feature of their excellent teaching. This challenges pupils to think deeply about their learning. This challenge can also be seen in the deeper level marking of pupils' work in most year groups. Consequently, pupils make very good progress.
- The school has rightly concentrated on developing challenge particularly for the more able pupils. However, in a small number of classes the tasks for the less able pupils are too challenging and therefore do not accurately reflect their very good learning in the lesson.

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

- In the absence of the Religious Education subject leader, the headteacher has developed the skills of three other members of staff who are caretaking this role. She knows the strengths of her staff well and has chosen them carefully for this key role. They are having a strong impact on the quality of Religious Education provision in the school.
- The school's provision for Religious Education is strong due to the effective collaboration between all members of staff. Through supportive monitoring and feedback, the leadership group ensure that staff are confident in their subject knowledge and teaching.
- In each phase pupils make very good progress. This progress across the school is obvious as pupils move up through the year groups. By the time they reach Year 6 the majority of pupils meet, and many pupils exceed, the expected outcomes in Religious Education.
- Governors are fully aware of the Religious Education subject leader's action plan. As a result, they have a detailed understanding about the priorities for Religious Education development.
- Governors have taken part in learning walks, books trawls and interviews with pupils. Therefore, they have a secure understanding of how monitoring has a positive impact on Religious Education teaching and learning.
- The governors have great faith in the work of the headteacher and her team of staff. They are proud of the school and the achievements made due to rigorous systems of monitoring and evaluation.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Pupil leadership of Collective Worship is very well developed. Pupils feel confident in leading other groups of pupils due to the excellent modelling and support of school staff at all levels. They value the opportunity to actively participate in the mission of the school through their leadership of Collective Worship. However, they are equally appreciative of their teachers' skills in the delivery of Collective Worship. They feel that staff are very knowledgeable and that they can learn a lot from them.
- Inspectors saw pupils taking part in a variety of Collective Worship including: the headteacher's assembly; pupil planned meditations and an Ash Wednesday service. During all these times of worship, pupils were active participants demonstrating an enthusiastic, thoughtful and prayerful response.
- During one particularly memorable lesson in Year 5, the pupils dramatised the temptations of Jesus in the desert and turned this into a song. This was an extremely effective way to engage pupils in their learning and pupil enjoyment was palpable within the classroom.
- Pupils' understanding of the liturgical year, seasons and feast days are well developed across all phases. Their preparation for pupil-led prayer services at the beginning of Lent demonstrated this.
- All pupils of faith, and those with none, enthusiastically join in with Collective Worship.
- Pupils learn about aspects of other world faiths and the many cultures that form British society. This work could be enhanced by visits to other places of worship to further their understanding of world faiths.

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

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff.
- All Collective Worship has a clear purpose, message and direction. The Church's liturgical season is central to the chosen themes for worship and supports the pupils' understanding of the Church's mission in education.
- High priority is given to the planning of Collective Worship. It is thoroughly evaluated by all members of the school body which results in memorable encounters with prayer.
- The staff of St Mary of the Angels have worked diligently to support pupils in planning and delivering quality worship. Their comprehensive understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship is clearly seen at pupil-led prayer times. Pupils speak highly of support given to them from staff throughout the school. The impact of this support was observed by inspectors at the pupil led Ash Wednesday service.

- Governors and parents are invited to attend many occasions of Collective Worship within the school and at their local church of St Mary of the Angels. There is a strong feeling on inclusivity throughout the school in which all members feel valued and confident to join in with prayer.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	104240
Local authority	Walsall
<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	Voluntary Aided
Age range	3-11yrs
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Susan Wilkinson
Headteacher	Mrs Claire O'Hara
Telephone number	01922 743411
Website address	www.st-maryangel.walsall.sch.uk
Email address	postbox@st-maryangel.walsall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25th - 26th February 2013

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- St Mary of the Angels is a one form entry primary school with a nursery class. The school serves the parish of St Mary of the Angels in the community of Aldridge, Walsall.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 82%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities is below 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 is below the national average.
- Attainment on entry is below national expectations.
- Since the last inspection a Religious Education curriculum group is caretaking the role of Religious Education subject leader.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors – Evelyn Harper and Mark Hinton.
- 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 seven RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- 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 chair of governors/Catholic Life link governor, a foundation governor, headteacher, the Religious Education curriculum group and a group of parents/grandparents.
- The inspectors attended a whole school assembly, class Collective Worship, an Ash Wednesday service led by two Eucharistic ministers/governors and undertook a learning walk with the Religious Education curriculum group to look the presentation of the Catholic Life of the school.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, the school development plan, the Religious Education action plan, and class Catholic Life journals.