



Archdiocese of Birmingham

INSPECTION REPORT

OUR LADY AND ST ROSE OF LIMA CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL BIRMINGHAM

Inspection dates 10th – 11th February 2014
Reporting Inspector Mary Baines

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 -11years
Number on roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Father Gary Buckby
School address	Gregory Avenue Weoley Castle Birmingham B29 5DY
Telephone number	0121 4642283
E-mail address	enquiry@olstrose.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2008
DFE School number	330/3351
Unique Reference Number	103443

Headteacher Mrs Suzan O'Meally

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 with the 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 the governors, staff, and parish priest. She observed an assembly, attended a whole school Mass, 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. She looked at a range of evidence related to the school's self evaluation such as RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals. Alongside the validation of school self evaluation, the inspector gathered evidence about the leadership of RE, evidence which will be shared with other diocesan schools.

Information about the school

Our Lady and St Rose of Lima is an average size Catholic primary school serving the parish of our Lady and St Rose of Lima in Weoley Castle. The children are from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The number of Catholic pupils is currently 57%. More than half of the pupils are from a very wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with over a third having English as a second language. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is almost fifty percent. The numbers with special needs and/or disabilities is above average. Attainment on entry into Early Years is well below the national average.

Main Finding

In its self evaluation Our Lady and St Rose School judges itself to be a good Catholic school where the quality of the pupils' learning and progress is good, collective worship is good with children participating in liturgy and worship, and teaching is good leading to good attainment. In the context of a school where there has been a considerable turnover of staff since the last inspection judgments are mainly reliable. Strategies for monitoring and evaluation are at the developmental stage but governors, leaders and managers are committed to ensuring they are fully implemented. The recently appointed deputy head leads RE and with the support of a newly appointed, very experienced assistant headteacher in addition to some new governors, the school has been strengthened and is well placed to improve in all areas especially in regard to monitoring the Catholic life and the teaching of RE which have been prioritised. The RE leader has engaged the advice of the diocesan adviser for his own development as well as for the school as a whole.

School self evaluation

While the school's overall evaluation gives a clear picture of the Catholic life of the school it does not describe fully the processes used to monitor and evaluate it. However the governors and leaders are fully committed to developing a range of activities relating to the provision and analysis of their findings in order to accurately diagnose the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors are clearly involved in ensuring that all action plans and policies are monitored and evaluated in order to promote the Catholic life of the school in all areas, thereby giving RE the same profile as other subjects. The link governor for RE and Catholic life is actively engaged in developing this role so that outcomes for all can be assessed and improvements made where necessary. The school rightly judges that collective worship is a strength of the school and that it is given a very high profile and is well resourced. Much is being achieved by pupils, staff, parents and parishioners through a

well thought out programme of opportunities for prayer. Staff regularly review the provision and, assisted by listening to the pupils, plan improvements. Pupils have had the opportunity to take a more active role in Masses and assemblies, PowerPoint presentations are used to engage both children and parents.

The chair of governors/parish priest brings a great deal of knowledge, experience and expertise to the school and is fully aware of what the Catholic life should be. He leads by example and is both supportive and challenging to the headteacher, RE leader and staff. Governor involvement in the school is now good with recently appointed, experienced governors regularly visiting to make themselves aware of the day to day Catholic life of the school, through monitoring activities and through headteacher's reports. They have total commitment to the school as a Catholic school and to religious education and are determined to lead the development of the school. They contribute very positively to the leadership, monitoring and evaluation of the school. They look to the headteacher for information and are ready to challenge her in order to ensure a shared purpose. The school's judgement that leadership overall is satisfactory is accurate, but the leadership of governors is good: the evidence demonstrates that governance is robust and having a growing impact on the school.

The way in which leaders monitor and evaluate RE does require improvement and development. They are beginning to conduct a range of monitoring activities and have a clear programme as part of the whole curriculum monitoring cycle. Newly appointed staff and governors have already effected a rigorous method of tracking data, analysis and intervention which is intended to improve outcomes for all by ensuring consistency across the school. This will include formal monitoring such as lesson observations, book scrutinies and pupil progress meetings. There are other informal observations during 'drop ins' as part of the performance management cycle. The recent extensive change in staff, including the leader of RE, has meant that in school training has taken place in order to ensure that all staff know and follow the long term curriculum plan, as well as understand and carry out appropriate assessments. Lessons show that children enjoy their RE and engage well with their learning. High quality question and answer sessions allied to good and better teaching ensure good learning and progress. The school self evaluation is correct in that more detailed differentiation would enable all groups of pupils to make better progress. Assessment follows diocesan guidelines but because some staff are new to the school it needs to be introduced to them and implemented by sharing with a more experienced colleague.

Self evaluation states that the curriculum is good and is enriched through imaginative and well planned strategies which lead to stimulating learning and provides good opportunities for spiritual and moral development. The school is justified in this assertion. The pupils' spiritual, moral and vocational development is judged by the school to be good; this is supported by the excellent, positive relationships that are evident between pupils allied to the commitment and spiritual input of the governors and staff.

Overall effectiveness of the school¹

Children enter EYFS with low levels of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. This is evidenced in the baseline assessment conducted during their first term. Following re-assessment in the summer term it is evident that they have already learned a wealth of knowledge including prayers, bible stories and how to care for each other. At the end of both key stages there is evidence that good and better progress has been made by all.

¹ 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.

Pupil voice interviews show that pupils enjoy their RE lessons and put their learning into practice in their lives and this contributes greatly to the Catholic life of the school.

Pupils take on responsibilities and participate constructively in the Catholic life of the school beyond routine lessons. They are reflective and enquiring. They understand that religious beliefs and spiritual values are important to many people and they show an interest in the religious life of others both of the Catholic faith and of other faiths. They participate readily in assemblies, Masses, prayer club and school choir as they understand their involvement builds up the Catholic life for all. They are secure and ready to express their own beliefs and they are considerate to others within school as well as in the wider community. The pupils take part in a great amount of fundraising for a wide variety of charities such as Fr Hudson's, MacMillan Nurses, and Good Shepherd. They understand the need to forgive and be forgiven. They have the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation at times.

Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school is on the cusp of being good with the potential of being good and better since the appointment of new governors and assistant head. There is now a range of monitoring activities which involve the governing body and senior management and which, when firmly embedded, is likely to produce reliable, strong evidence of the Catholic life. The governors promote the Catholicity of the school through their appointments policy and their attendance at spiritual days of reflection. The children enjoy visits to a number of places of worship for other faiths and also to Alton Castle, St Chad's Cathedral and Oscott Seminary.

All teaching is effective in ensuring that all pupils are engaged in their learning and enjoy their lessons. Teaching has improved through in-service training and a more rigorous approach to assessment thereby encouraging planning which meets the needs of all pupils. The majority of teaching enables pupils to make good progress. All staff teaching RE have received training from the diocese to ensure good quality teaching which inspires and challenges pupils. In lessons pupils are keen to learn, concentrate well and achieve highly. Good and imaginative use is made of resources including IT to maximise learning. Support provided by other adults in class is effectively deployed and facilitate learning.

The RE curriculum is customised to meet the needs of groups and individuals. It provides good opportunities for spiritual and moral development and raises pupils' awareness of other faiths. The curriculum is enriched by sacramental preparation through a strong partnership between home, school and parish, as well as a variety of opportunities for liturgical celebration. The children are taking increased roles in preparation of liturgies in class and whole school.

Recommendations

- Establish systematic and thorough processes for monitoring and evaluating the Catholic life of the school.
- Develop a team to manage, lead and develop, monitor and evaluate the Catholic life, collective worship and RE in the school.