



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

OUR LADY OF COMPASSION CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kineton Green Road, Olton, Solihull, B92 7EG

Inspection date	12 th & 13 th October 2017
Reporting Inspector	Dominic Collins

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	306
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Mr Paul Gray
Telephone number	0121 706 9508
E-mail address	78office@olc.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2012
DFE School Number	334/3504
Unique Reference Number	104102

Headteacher	Mrs Lisa Montandon
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Previous inspection:	Good
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This inspection:	Good
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DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



MAKING CHRIST KNOWN TODAY

Evidence

- The inspection was carried out by one Diocesan Inspector.
- 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 inspector observed teaching across 4 RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher or deputy head teacher.
- The inspector 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 chair/ Catholic life link governor, the vice chair, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the RE subject leader, the parish priest and parents.
- The inspector attended a whole school assembly, shared class worship, 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.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, Analyse School Performance (ASP) data, the school development plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals.

Information about the school

- Our Lady of Compassion is a larger than average sized Catholic primary school that serves the parish of the Holy Ghost and Mary Immaculate, known as Olton Friary. The school is situated in a very mixed demographic area of South Olton, Solihull.
- The number of Catholic pupils is currently 91%.
- The number of pupils from a minority ethnic heritage group is broadly in line with the national average.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is broadly in line with the national average.
- Attainment on entry is in line with the national average.
- Since the last inspection a new chair of governors has been appointed. The former chair of governors remains on the board of governors. Due to a number of governors' terms of office ending, several new governors have also been appointed.

Main Findings

- Our Lady of Compassion School is welcoming and inclusive with an outstanding Catholic ethos, thus enabling pupils to enjoy their learning and to develop their full potential.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and sets high standards for all members of the school community.
- The school strives to provide the best possible RE outcomes for all pupils. This vision is shared by a dedicated staff team and supportive governors, who place the spiritual and moral development of the pupils as their highest priority.
- Provision for collective worship is central to the Catholic life of the school and reflects its strong Catholic character.

- Strong leadership and effective teaching, ensures that pupils make good, sustained progress in RE throughout the school.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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

- The Catholic life of Our Lady of Compassion Primary School is outstanding.
- The impact of its strong Catholic character is evident on entering the school. The virtues and values from the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile (CSPP) are prominently displayed, together with a beautifully presented 'Stations of the Cross' mural, religious artefacts and a variety of pupils' RE work.
- This is a welcoming and inclusive school. The outstanding Catholic ethos is reflected in the happiness of pupils and united commitment of all staff and governors to the Catholic mission of the school.
- The school is guided by its mission to, *'Live as Jesus Taught Us'*, which is rooted in the Beatitudes. As a result, it successfully promotes values that positively shape the pupils' character and moral development.
- The school has adopted the Catholic Schools Pupil Profile and there is a whole school focus on a virtue and a value each half term. During a weekly 'Praise' assembly, a pupil from each class is appropriately recognised for displaying virtues and behaviours which show that they are living out the school motto – "To Live as Jesus Taught Us." As a consequence, pupils have a clear understanding of the school's values and shared mission. They are eager to express their Catholic identity in the way they embrace this.
- A St. Vincent de Paul children's group (Mini Vinnies) led by a member of staff and a governor, is being established. This will provide an additional focus for pupils to live out the Gospel values within school and the wider community.
- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. Pupils respond positively to the happy, vibrant, Catholic ethos of the school. It is evident they enjoy coming to school, they know how much they are valued as individuals and they recognise the responsibility they have towards contributing to a harmonious community.
- Pupils are aware of the consequences of their own actions. They understand we are all equal as children of God and recognise the importance of showing forgiveness and compassion to our neighbour. This forms the essential foundation of the school's Catholic community.
- Inspired by the visionary direction of the school leadership, the staff are a committed and effective team, who know the children well. They are excellent role models who exercise a high level of pastoral care and promote the Gospel values by their example. As a consequence, the school community is successful in fostering a very positive environment, enabling all pupils to grow in their faith.
- Pupils take full advantage of the many opportunities the school provides for their personal and moral development. Older pupils accept a variety of responsibilities with confidence, pride and maturity. These include roles as house captain, play leaders and 'buddies' to Reception class children. A number of pupils give up their break times to act as a reading partner to younger children. They have a secure understanding of service to others within the school.
- The school pupil council is a very effective group, comprising of elected

representatives across the school, providing them with a voice to project pupils' views. Suggestions made by them are carefully considered by staff and governors.

- The support the school gives to charitable appeals throughout the year is an example of pupils' awareness of the needs of others and promotes their understanding of global citizenship and Catholic virtues in action.
- Fund raising events to support the work of CAFOD, Father Hudson's Care, the Good Shepherd Appeal and Samaritan's Purse 'shoe-box', are enthusiastically and successfully driven and organised by pupils. This enables pupils to be engaged in their faith. As a result, pupils know how their faith is lived out in their lives.
- The continual empowerment of pupils and their contribution to the evaluation of Catholic life through questionnaires, discussion and suggestions, does much to promote their confidence, moral awareness and self-esteem. This is a significant strength of the school.
- The school strongly promotes the notion of vocations. Pupils are encouraged to use the special gifts we are given by God, in order to fulfil our personal vocation in life. The parish priest, seminarians, staff, governors and parents are invited to lead discussions with pupils about their own vocations. Prompted by a request by two pupils, in response to a diocesan vocations poster, a seminarian is now allocated to each class, to be prayed for during their daily worship.
- The school works effectively to promote a developing awareness of other faiths and religions in school and the wider community. It successfully ensures that pupils from all backgrounds are fully integrated into every aspects of school life. Pupils are respectful of other faiths during lessons and visits to places of worship.
- Catholic life is enriched by opportunities for pupils to benefit from and contribute to a variety of high quality religious experiences. For example, Year 5 children attend a retreat at Alton Castle. Year 6 children visit St. Chad's Cathedral and attend a retreat at Olton Friary led by the parish priest.
- The school is an integral part of the parish community and strong links are very well established. Parents and parishioners are invited to join the children for school Masses, assemblies and liturgical events throughout the year.
- The school and parish organise a variety of joint events and celebrations for families to enjoy together. Christmas and Summer Fayres, pantomimes and special activities are well supported.
- In order to broaden these community initiatives, the introduction of parish prayer partners is a focus on the current school development plan.
- Chaplaincy provision is excellent. The parish clergy visit school regularly to celebrate Mass. They are very supportive of the Catholic life of the school and are key partners in the planning of Masses and assemblies. This fruitful partnership provides valuable guidance in the development of Collective Worship throughout the school.
- The parish sacramental programme is well organised and benefits from the excellent partnership between home, school and parish. Several staff members are parish catechists.

- Pupils are encouraged to become altar servers at school and parish Masses. Training is given by the Guild of St. Stephen through Olton Friary.
- Provision for collective worship is outstanding and underpins the Catholic life of the school. Celebration of the Eucharist is given the highest priority by the whole school community.
- Prayer is an integral part of the school day and there are many opportunities for staff and pupils to pray and reflect together.
- Pupils are at ease when praying. In addition to demonstrating a sound knowledge of traditional prayers, they are able to express their own prayers and petitions confidently with others.
- Pupils' response to collective worship is outstanding. They are attentive and reverent in prayer and understand the importance it has in their daily lives.
- Through the 'buddies' initiative, Year 6 are proud to guide their younger partners during the celebration of Mass held in school and at the Friary.
- Resources are used effectively by staff to create a prayerful atmosphere. The school choir and a whole school focus on singing joyful songs of praise has made a positive contribution to the development of collective worship.
- In response to the previous inspection, pupils are now more involved in composing their own prayers and leading class and school worship.
- Class worship at Key Stage 2 is planned and led by pupils. A liturgy group has also been established. These skills should now be developed to broaden the pupil leadership of collective worship throughout the school.
- Interesting and informative prayer areas and religious displays of pupils' work are prominently featured around the school. Classroom environments are made bright and attractive, each with a distinctive prayer focus.
- The school fosters a close relationship with parents. They are welcomed and encouraged to join the children at Masses, assemblies and celebrations such as the May procession.
- In order to encourage family prayer at home, a class prayer bag is available for pupils to take home each week. Parents are invited to write their own prayers in the enclosed booklet.
- Prayer and evangelisation is at the heart of the school community, where all work together with a common purpose to be successful in encouraging the Catholic faith.
- A varied range of written and pictorial evidence relating to Catholic life, some recorded by the 'pupil photographers' in each class is prominently displayed on each class prayer table. These beautifully presented books depict the vibrancy of Catholic life that make the pupils so proud of their school.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and Collective Worship

- The leadership of Catholic life and collective worship is good with several areas of outstanding practice.
- There is clear evidence that leaders and governors share a strong commitment to the Church's mission in education and are successful in developing the Catholic life of the school.
- The headteacher sets high standards and expectations about Catholic life for

all members of the school community. This vision is shared by a dedicated staff team and supportive governors, who place the spiritual and moral development of the pupils as their highest priority.

- Central to all areas of the school's Catholic life is the guidance given through its mission. This serves as a reference for self-evaluation and quality assurance.
- Governors know the school well, visit on a regular basis and are dedicated in supporting the school to be successful in its mission. The newly elected chair of governors, who is also the link governor for Catholic life and RE, has taken swift action to conduct a whole school Catholic life audit with the headteacher and RE leader.
- In addition to reports received by the governors from the headteacher and RE subject leader, there is clear evidence that governors make a valuable contribution to self-evaluation of Catholic life and collective worship. As a consequence of establishing a systematic approach to self-evaluation, governors have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- In view of recent major changes within the governing body, consideration should be given to accessing the appropriate diocesan training to assist future strategic planning.
- The school leadership ensures that parents and pupils are included in the self-evaluation of Catholic life and collective worship through questionnaires and reflections on Masses and assemblies.
- Senior leaders effectively manage the unique character of the school building. They provide a stimulating and purposeful learning environment that promotes the Catholic life of the school.
- All newly appointed staff are very well supported. They are fully inducted in their roles and responsibilities in the Catholic life of the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- Religious Education at Our Lady of Compassion is good.
- The systems used by the school leadership for monitoring and evaluating the school's work in RE are effective. Leaders monitor standards in RE through scrutiny of planning, assessment of pupils' work, questionnaires, pupil interviews and focused learning walks. Consequently, they have a good understanding of the quality of RE provision and the impact it has on pupils' learning.
- This accurate self-evaluation of RE provision has influenced the deployment of classroom support staff. This has had a significant impact on the quality of learning for individuals and groups of pupils, who benefit from a programme of targeted and high quality support.
- Religious Education is very well led and managed by the RE subject leader, who provides a high level of support to all staff, especially in the assessment and monitoring of pupil progress and attainment. She also leads areas of RE professional development.
- Good practice in RE and the RE action plan, identifying areas for development are shared with staff.
- Systems for assessing pupil progress and attainment are rigorous and robust.

A pupil tracking system, unique to the school, has been devised by the deputy headteacher who is also the assessment lead.

- Class teachers are confident in using the assessment system to track an individual pupil's progress and groups of pupils' progress. This then effectively informs future teaching and learning.
- Class teachers provide appropriate challenge to most pupils in RE. However, the school has accurately identified the need to increase the challenge to more able pupils.
- Analysis of pupil tracking reveals their rapid progress in RE from outcomes of baseline data on entry. This improvement continues across each key stage. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' work and knowledge has developed well in maturity and quality.
- The quality of teaching and learning in RE is a constant focus for school self-evaluation. RE lessons are regularly monitored by the headteacher and subject leader. Feedback to staff is given in a supportive and professional manner. This has led to consistently good teaching in RE.
- Standards of attainment in RE are consistent across the school. They are in line with diocesan expectations and for a significant number above expectation.
- In the RE lessons observed during the inspection, teachers communicate their faith to pupils through their enthusiasm and strong subject knowledge.
- Pupils enjoy their RE lessons and demonstrate an excellent work ethic. They see their RE books as special. Consequently, the presentation and quality of work is very good.
- Teachers use a range of effective teaching styles and well matched activities to fully engage pupils. As a result, pupils are motivated and interested during RE lessons.
- Marking of pupils' work is developmental overall, showing pupils how to improve.
- The RE curriculum complies fully with the *Diocesan Strategy* and has been successfully adapted to ensure that all pupils are able to engage in their learning.
- Relationships and Sex Education is taught in accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- Broaden the role of the newly formed liturgy group for planning and leading collective worship throughout the school.
- In view of the major restructuring of the governing body, engage with ongoing diocesan training in order to support future planning and development.
- Increase the challenge for more able pupils in RE.