



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

ST JOHN BOSCO CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Monmouth Drive, West Bromwich, Sandwell, B7 12ST

Inspection date	23 rd & 24 th March 2017
Reporting Inspector	Debbie Huxtable
Assistant Inspector	Bernadette Corbett

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	265
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Mrs M Powell
Telephone number	0121 556 0228
E-mail address	headteacher@st-johnbosco.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	March 2012
DFE School Number	333 3303
Unique Reference Number	103991

Headteacher	Mr Edward Masterson
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Previous inspection:	Outstanding
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This inspection:	Outstanding
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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 three RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of these lessons were conducted jointly with the 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 governors including the chair, the headteacher and the subject leader.
- The inspectors attended a whole school Mass, celebration assembly 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 inspectors reviewed a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, RAISE online, the development plan, RE Action Plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals.

Information about the school

- St John Bosco is a one-form entry primary school situated in an area of West Bromwich, Sandwell. The school serves two parishes: the parish of St. Michael the Archangel and the parish of the Holy Cross.
- 58% of the school population is Catholic.
- The number of pupils that come from ethnic minority backgrounds is well above the national average.
- The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above the national average as is the number of disadvantaged pupils.
- The number of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) pupils is broadly in line with the national average.
- Attainment on entry is below expectations and this is reflected in the RE baseline where pupils enter school with very little prior knowledge of the signs and symbols of the Catholic faith.
- The current leadership team has been in place for eighteen months and the RE leader has been in post since September 2016.
- The school has been a National Teaching School for the past four years and has supported several other schools.

Main Findings

- The Catholic life, collective worship and religious education at St John Bosco Catholic Primary School are all outstanding.
- The strong leadership of the governing body, headteacher and senior leaders demonstrates total commitment to the Catholic life of the school and all members of this diverse community are proud of the Catholic ethos.
- The school's excellent environment promotes Catholic values and is welcoming and reflective for visitors and the community.
- The pupils' response to collective worship is outstanding and children show enthusiasm to plan, deliver and take part in all aspects of worship.

- The school has effective self-evaluation processes and systems which present an accurate analysis of what the school is doing well and what they need to do to improve further.
- Monitoring and evaluation of RE results in improvements in teaching and learning and these are accurately identified in development planning.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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

- Catholic life of the school is outstanding.
- The Eucharist is central to the life of the school and all members of the school family are committed to its celebration. Pupils are enthusiastic and look forward to the celebration of weekly Mass. They show a high level of engagement, as well as respect and reverence from even the youngest pupils.
- The school has a welcoming and engaging environment and school leaders and staff have worked hard to ensure that the Catholicity of the school is at the heart of that environment and that all else stems from it. The schools mission statement “Living, Learning and Growing in God’s Love” is displayed around the school and pupils are able to reflect on the impact it has on their daily lives.
- New staff are provided with an appropriate induction programme including a variety of training opportunities; all staff feel they are well supported and confident to contribute to the Catholic life and collective worship of the school.
- Pupils appreciate and value the Catholic Life of the school and contribute to its evaluation. During the inspection pupils spoke confidently about their input and the willingness of staff and the clergy to listen to their views and ideas.
- Pupils value and respect each other as equals and see the diversity of their backgrounds and faiths as making a positive contribution to how they live out their lives and learn to be people of faith.
- Senior leaders provide governors with a variety of information on the Catholic Life and collective worship of the school but there needs to be more evidence of these discussions and the challenge the governors provide.
- During the inspection pupils demonstrated reverence and respect at all liturgies and collective worship. This was particularly evident in the classes observed, where children, even in KS1, confidently planned and led the collective worship themselves.
- Pupils were enthusiastic about how they were involved in the planning, preparation and delivery of collective worship. However, there was little variety in styles and types of prayer and pupils would benefit from a broader range of prayer experiences.
- The introduction of a school prayer book and the schedule of prayers to be learnt in each class has greatly improved the knowledge and understanding of formal prayers in the school. Pupils are very proud of their school prayer that was composed by them and is said daily in most classes.
- Liturgy leaders are well trained and are skilled at leading liturgies in their own classrooms and have also had opportunities to model these skills to other year groups. They were enthusiastic about a recent learning walk they undertook at another Catholic school where they were able to share ideas with other pupils and bring back some new ideas for their own school.

- The school has worked hard to develop the opportunities for collective worship in the outside areas of the school. There are now several outside prayer areas and children of all ages use and respond positively to these. The impact of these areas is ably demonstrated by confident and skilled Year 6 pupils who enthusiastically lead prayers for a small group of younger pupils at lunchtimes in the outdoor classroom.
- Pupils display an understanding that we are called to serve and that their support of a variety of charities and their acts of kindness are a demonstration of this. They readily take on responsibilities and know that they all have a vocation in life which is specially for them.
- Behaviour of pupils throughout the inspection was exemplary and showed a high degree of respect to both adults and other children alike.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and Collective Worship

- Leadership of Catholic life and collective worship is outstanding as the school demonstrates a determination to celebrate the distinctive nature of the school and how that manifests itself in the daily lives of the pupils.
- All members of the school community contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of Catholic life and collective worship. Although governors clearly question and challenge the school, it is not always reflected in reports and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The headteacher has a clear understanding of his role in the leadership of the Catholic life of the school. He, along with the leadership team, have high expectations and are fully committed to ensuring that the pupils experience of Catholic life is rich and meaningful and that it helps each child to know and live out their lives according to the teachings of Jesus.
- The school works very closely with a variety of partner schools to share good practice, moderate activities and further develop closer links across the diocese.
- Leadership is committed to the further development of all staff both professionally and personally. All opportunities are taken to attend diocesan training and most teaching staff have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS.)
- The recently appointed RE leader is enthusiastic about her new role and staff see her as a supportive and approachable role model. Impact of her vision and commitment are already evident and she has a clear understanding of her role within the school and parish communities.
- The priests from both parishes are regular visitors to the school and take advantage of all opportunities to support and appropriately extend the school in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding of the faith.
- School and parishes work well together and there are some opportunities within the sacramental programme for children and families to develop parish links. However, these are limited and there are few activities or occasions when other year groups engage with the parishes.
- Governors and the headteacher all ensure that staff appraisal includes targets that reflect the Catholicity of the school and are appropriately challenging.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- Evidence seen during the inspection shows that religious education at St John Bosco Catholic Primary School is outstanding.
- The Headteacher and RE subject lead have high expectations and any areas for development or gaps in provision or outcomes are picked up and acted upon immediately. There is a constant drive to raising standards with effective systems of assessment and moderation in place that are fed back to staff and leadership on a regular basis.
- Tracking of pupil performance is embedded and trends and cohort data is readily available for analysis by the RE subject lead and senior leadership. Data for vulnerable groups is also collected and recent analysis has accurately identified those groups who need targeting for extra support.
- Teachers have an excellent subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about how they can inspire and motivate pupils in their lessons. Lessons are creative and all pupils are engaged and enthusiastic about their learning.
- Outcomes for all pupils are high both in their books and during discussions. They are very articulate and able to discuss their learning, make links and relate their learning to what it means for them in their daily lives.
- Although governors have a good understanding of standards through a variety of monitoring activities they would benefit from a more formal, regular review of data, including that of vulnerable groups, reflected in their minutes enabling them to celebrate the high standards that pupils and to identify any areas that require improvement.
- RE is clearly seen by senior leaders as a core subject; evidence seen during lesson observations showed that expectations of staff and pupils were in line with other core subjects. Attainment is at least in line with diocesan expectations and for many it is above expectations.
- Pupils make good progress in lessons and across modules. Progress across classes and across the whole school is at least good, with some pupils making outstanding progress from their starting point to the end of Year 6.
- Pupils are productive during lessons and use a variety of ways of recording and applying their skills. They are highly motivated and staff are adept at posing challenging questions that lead to deep and profound learning.
- The recent review and subsequent developments to the RE planning shows a whole school dedication to providing high quality experiences; this has proved to be highly effective in ensuring consistency across all year groups.
- The parish priests and other visitors to the school, also contribute to the delivery and development of the curriculum, and add strength and depth to the evaluation of the outcomes for pupils.
- Religious education is monitored in line with other subjects and there are regular and planned, lesson observations, drop-ins and work scrutiny. Outcomes are reviewed and discussed with senior leadership so that professional development within school can be planned to accommodate individuals and groups of staff.
- Education about equality and diversity is a strong component of the curriculum and children respond positively to their learning about other faiths and cultures.

- Pupils enjoy their RE lessons and all observations and interviews during the inspection show pupils are keen to learn, are able to work collaboratively or independently and enjoy debating and discussing key messages within their lessons.
- Marking and feedback in RE books is in line with other core subjects and pupils know how to make improvements to their work. Teachers regularly provide challenging questions during lessons as well as in their RE books to encourage deeper learning and how to apply this to how they treat each other.
- Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunity to pose questions that are open ended and challenging. Liturgy leaders were enthusiastic to explain the use of wonder and awe questions that are used in all classrooms to encourage questions of meaning and purpose. They felt these questions led to deeper discussions and provided an opportunity for a variety of answers to questions that did not always have a single answer.
- Support staff provide high quality input and are skilled and well deployed to support pupils' learning and teachers. They demonstrate good subject knowledge and questioning skills that extend learning and clarify misconceptions.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- To develop the partnership between school and parishes to enhance the sacramental preparation and engagement of all pupils in the life of the parish.
- To develop a more robust system of reporting to governors to ensure that records and minutes more accurately reflect their discussion, challenge and understanding of Catholic life, collective worship and RE.
- To develop the prayer life of pupils through a broader variety of prayer types and experiences that provide pupils with opportunities to respond on a personal level.