Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection Report

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Part of Saint Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company
Lea Vale Road, Norton, Stourbridge, DY8 2DT

Inspection dates :	3rd - 4th December 2018
Lead Inspector:	Mary Daniels

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:	**Good**
Catholic Life:	Outstanding
Religious Education:	Good
Collective Worship:	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection:	*Outstanding*

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is a Good Catholic school because:

- The school has a strong sense of Catholic community. Relationships at all levels are excellent, especially between the parish and the school.
- As a result of the secure teaching they receive in Religious Education, pupils make good progress in this subject.
- Pupils' leadership of Collective Worship throughout the school is excellent. Pupils' skills in leading Collective Worship show a clear progression from Reception to Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 are especially confident to lead Collective Worship with expertise.
- The leadership and management of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship in the school are excellent. School leaders have responded in a decisive way to monitoring in these areas. This has led to strong improvements in all areas of the Catholic Life of the school.

It is not yet Outstanding because:

- In Religious Education, not enough pupils, especially those in key stage 2, make more than expected progress.
- Some pupils, especially the more able pupils, are not sufficiently challenged in Religious Education to extend their learning.

FULL REPORT

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine the use of assessment systems in Religious Education, so that they better support staff in ensuring that a greater number of pupils make more than expected progress.
- Provide greater challenge for more able pupils in Religious Education so that their progress is consistently good.

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 school promotes a strong sense of Catholic community with a supportive and joyful environment. School leaders regularly encourage staff and pupils to pray for each other and to perform acts of kindness for one another. These activities are promoted on prayer boards in the staffroom and in all classrooms.
- There are particularly strong links between the school and parish. The principal and several other members of staff are active in the parish, acting as eucharistic ministers and reading at Mass. Pupils are also involved in the life of the parish with a large number of pupils serving at Sunday Mass. In addition, a group of Year 6 pupils helps serve lunches to the elderly at the parish centre on a regular basis.
- Relationships between the school and parents are also strong. The school has an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA), which meets regularly to raise money for the school. Parents are supported in their own spiritual development and several parents have joined a 'Journey of Faith' programme organised by the parish.
- The Catholic School Pupil Profile (CSPP) is embedded in the life of the school and pupils use the virtues it promotes to modify their behavior. These are constantly referred to and are clearly evident in displays around the school in corridors and classrooms.
- There are numerous opportunities for pupils to be leaders in the school and to give service to others. Pupils are play leaders, anti-bullying ambassadors and school council members. Older pupils are excellent role models and help younger pupils to resolve minor conflicts.
- Listening to the opinions of pupils is important to the school's leaders. Pupils are given the opportunity to comment on the life of the school and their suggestions are acted upon. For example, a Minnie Vinnie group and Youth Group have been established as a result of listening to pupil voice.
- As a result of the school encouraging pupils to share their own views, pupils feel confident to challenge traditional and established practices. Recently, a question

raised by a pupil to the school council queried why the patron saint of each house team were male.

- All pupils are enthusiastic about being part of a Catholic community. Charitable work plays an important part in this Catholic community and numerous opportunities are provided for pupils to be involved in fundraising activities. The school supports various charities including Fr Hudson's Care, the Good Shepherd appeal and a local food bank. During the inspection, a reverse Advent calendar activity encouraged pupils to bring in food for those less fortunate than themselves.
- Respect for the Catholic tradition of the school was celebrated during Remembrance Day activities. To mark the centenary of the Armistice, the school remembered past pupils who had died during World War 1. A permanent plaque was placed in the hall in their memory.
- Pupils are aware of and respect all faiths. A Year 6 pupil described how a fellow pupil, who is Sikh, shared their faith with the whole class by preparing resources for the class.
- 'I Wonder Books' are used in every class. These books encourage pupils to be reflective and deepen their love of God. For example, in Year 6, pupils were asked what Confirmation meant to them and they were also encouraged to wonder why working together with other pupils was important.
- The school provides numerous opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities. During the inspection, a 'Music and Mince Pie' event took place, where pupils of all ages had the opportunity to give a musical performance for parents and staff.
- The school has a Mass band that plays at school Masses. Pupils who join the band often continue to play at secondary school and return to St Joseph's to perform for the younger pupils.
- Pupils have a developed understanding of vocation and they see it as a calling from God about how to live their lives. In particular, the school's 'Rights and Responsibilities' promotes 'the right to develop as God wants me to be'.
- All staff are committed to the mission of the school, which states, 'In following the Gospel values of Jesus, we are called to love, to learn and respect one another.' Staff are clearly supportive of the school and contribute positively to its Catholic Life. They often attend parish Masses and other events organised by the school. Staff show great respect for both pupils and other members of staff. They are excellent role models, actively promoting the Catholic Life of the school through their example.
- The whole environment clearly represents the Catholic Life of the school. Visitors are aware of the Catholic nature of the school as soon as they enter the building and this is continued throughout the school. The mission statement is prominent in the school entrance and in all classrooms. There are varied displays that celebrate its Catholic ethos, including the life of the school's patron, St Joseph and the virtues promoted through the CSPP, in a virtues tree.
- Chaplaincy provision is a strength of the school. The parish priest greatly contributes to the Catholic Life of the school. He leads Mass regularly, is a member of the academy committee and also offers pastoral support to staff.
- He encourages parents to be involved in Catholic Life through their child's sacramental preparation. This excellent preparation is delivered in collaboration between the parish and the school. There is a great response to this preparation from the families involved, with all of them attending the parish Masses and meetings provided.
- Pastoral care, including support for both individual pupils and families, is outstanding. For example, the school has a gross-motor support programme, which takes place every morning and an established nurture group.

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

- All leaders and governors demonstrate outstanding commitment to the Church's mission in education. This was clearly seen through their response to the monitoring visit by Diocesan Education Service (DES). Leaders and governors acted promptly to meet the recommendations of the monitoring report and this has led to improvements in all areas of the Catholic Life of the school.
- The principal is a very visible presence around the site and he leads the faith community of the school. He can be seen each day welcoming pupils and families on the playground. Relationships and care of pupils is a strength of the school.
- There is a well-planned and targeted development plan in place to improve Catholic Life. This plan includes targets that were highlighted through monitoring.
- Governors make a significant contribution to the school. They are very visible, attending Masses, retreats and residential trips. They are involved in rigorous and well-established monitoring of Catholic Life. This ensures they know the school's strengths and areas for development and can contribute effectively to self-evaluation.
- The Catholic Education Service (CES) audit is completed annually by governors, which supports them in identifying any areas for development.
- The experienced MAC directors give very good support to the school. They provide the opportunity for senior leaders and managers to regularly meet together to monitor Catholic Life across the MAC and to share good practice and expertise.
- Senior leaders, governors and the MAC directors work well together and there is a real sense of team work between them. Governors have every confidence in the principal, they value his commitment to the school and describe him as 'a man of faith.'
- Senior leaders and governors actively encourage parental involvement with the school through the web-site and the school diary.
- Training, organised by senior leaders and governors, responds to areas identified through monitoring and evaluation activities. Support and training have been provided by the diocese and joint training has also been given through the MAC. All staff and governors have attended training by the Religious Education subject leader, which focused on the diocesan document, 'Christ at the Centre.'

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

- Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is very good and a number of pupils achieve above age related expectations.

- Most pupils in key stage 1 make good progress from the time they enter the school. However, progress across key stage 2 is variable. This is especially so for the progress of more able pupils.
- Groups that have been targeted by teachers have made good progress. This progress can be clearly seen in pupils' books, where their response to teaching is becoming more reflective. However, staff need to make better use of assessment data and strategies. This will help them to identify pupils that require further support and challenge, to improve their progress in Religious Education. More able pupils would especially benefit from greater challenge.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons is good. Pupils are engaged in their learning and are enthusiastic and eager. Most concentrate well and know how to improve their work.
- The vast majority of pupils enjoy Religious Education lessons and some pupils explained to the inspectors that they especially enjoyed the creative aspects of their lessons, such as designing posters, learning through art and making scrolls.
- Pupils have good Religious Education subject knowledge and can refer to past learning when responding to questions. For example, they understand the importance of holy water, "because it shows new life with God," and that Advent is, "the time to prepare our hearts to receive Jesus."
- The teaching of Religious Education in the school is good overall with some outstanding practice. Teachers plan good, differentiated lessons and have suitable expectations for pupils. Their subject knowledge is good and they use a range of strategies to motivate and engage pupils.
- Teaching Religious Education through art is very effective in the school. Pupils study religious imagery and their learning is extended through careful examination of the images. Pupils are prompted to reflect on the images to deepen their learning and understanding. In a lesson observed during the inspection, pupils were asked to complete a thoughts and feelings sheet using different imagery of the Visitation. Pupils were encouraged to think deeply about the feelings and thoughts of Mary and Elizabeth.
- Teachers give good quality feedback to pupils and they are generally given the opportunity to respond to teachers' marking in their books.
- The use of teachers' questioning in lessons is good and well thought out questions are used to extend and deepen pupils' learning. During the inspection, teachers asked a range of questions to challenge pupils' thinking. For example, when teaching about Zachariah, pupils were asked, 'How did he feel?' and 'How would you feel?' about the Angel Gabriel's appearance.
- Teachers encourage pupils to reflect about how their learning in Religious Education lessons will influence the way they behave. During the inspection, pupils discussed how they could get ready for the birth of Jesus at Christmas. Their responses included sharing, praying and being kind to each other.
- Teachers provide good links to pupils' previous learning and make sure that lessons have the correct pace. Pupils are able to move between activities and take part in a combination of individual and group work.
- Each classroom has brightly presented evidence of the pupils' work in Religious Education, which supports and celebrates their learning.
- Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is celebrated regularly through Praise Assemblies, house points and a Wall of Pride in the hall.

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

- The leadership of Religious Education is very good. The Religious Education subject leader, who is also vice principal, has an inspiring vision for Religious Education. She has a high level of expertise in this area and her subject knowledge is excellent. She is currently chair of the MAC Religious Education group. Monitoring of the subject is very regular and leads to improvements in teaching and learning. She provides very good support for staff.
- Leaders and managers ensure the school meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. Religious Education is taught regularly and the amount of work completed in pupils' books meets diocesan expectations.
- Religious Education is comparable to other core subjects and is given the same priority as them in terms of capitation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Religious Education is monitored regularly through learning walks, lesson observations and book scrutinies. Information gathered through this monitoring is shared with staff and governors and the findings are used to inform action plans for improvement and completion of the school's self-evaluation.
- Moderation of the standards in pupils' Religious Education work takes place regularly in school and across the MAC. This helps to ensure that teachers' assessments are accurate and contributes to developing staff subject knowledge in Religious Education.
- Training is regularly provided for staff by the subject leader. During training, information and updates from cluster groups and the diocese are shared with all staff. This helps staff to keep up to date with current developments and expectations in Religious Education.
- Class Religious Education folders in particular are of real value to staff. All the necessary information for Religious Education teaching and learning are contained in them. The inclusion of pupils' current assessment information in these folders helps teachers to plan lessons that meet the needs of pupils. However, the use of this assessment information to inform teaching and learning, by teachers and senior leaders, would benefit from further development.

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 ability of pupils to lead Collective Worship is a strength of the school. As pupils progress through the school, they are given greater responsibility to lead and plan times of prayer. For example, in Reception and Year 1, pupils are able to pass a candle or stone around a circle and to offer up their prayers. In Year 2, pupils have

a prayer box, where they place the prayers they have written. These prayers are then read by pupils during acts of worship. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are planning and leading Collective Worship using the *Gather, Listen, Respond and Go Forth* model. The use of this model is very effective, as it allows prayer leaders to genuinely inspire their peers during Collective Worship.

- Pupils are reverent during Collective Worship, where they sing joyfully and join in with the prayers. They are exposed to a variety of prayer experiences, including the use of Christian meditation, which is embedded across the school. The imaginative use of meditation has encouraged pupils to pray using colour, this has meant pupils are able to stay focused and involved in the meditation.
- There is evidence of pupils writing their own prayers around the school and in their Religious Education books.
- Prayer plays a central part to the life of the school and pupils know that they can pray at any time during the day. A gazebo, situated in the key stage 2 playground, gives pupils a quiet place to pray during break times.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to attend some voluntary acts of worship. For example, many pupils pray the Rosary at break times, during October and May.
- The themes and events for Collective Worship are planned according to the seasons and feasts of the Church's year. As a result, the pupils have an excellent understanding of the liturgical year.
- Collective Worship has a high priority in the school in terms of planning, evaluating and resourcing. It is well planned, so that it is relevant to the lives of the pupils. Staff are determined to provide pupils with high quality experiences of prayer and use a wide variety of resources to involve them. As a result, it is always engaging and presented with expertise.
- Collective Worship is led by a number of adults across the school. Among other things, they reflect on aspects of the liturgical year, explore key themes about saints and promote the virtues of the CSPP.

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

- Collective Worship is very well organised and planned by the principal and Religious Education subject leader.
- The monitoring of Collective Worship is a regular part of the overall monitoring and evaluation schedule of the school. It involves gathering the views of all the school community. School leaders regularly seek the view of parents after they have attended acts of Collective Worship. Their response is always favourable and they value being part of the prayer life of the school.
- Governors visit the school regularly to share in celebrations and Masses with the pupils and staff. This allows them to observe the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school and to see its impact on the pupils.
- The parish priest works closely with the principal and Religious Education subject leader to promote and evaluate the quality of Collective Worship that takes place in the school.
- The evaluation of Collective Worship is shared termly through governor reports and meetings with key members of staff. This information is used effectively to develop Collective Worship further.
- Leaders know how to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. All staff are excellent role models and guide and support pupils during Collective Worship.
- Collective Worship has a clear message and purpose. Themes for Masses and assemblies reflect the liturgical calendar to ensure pupils have an excellent understanding of liturgical year, seasons and feasts.

- Through the informative school newsletter and web-site, parents and carers are made aware of the prayers that pupils are using in school and of any Collective Worship that they can attend.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	141477
Local authority	Dudley
This inspection was carried out under canon 806 of Canon Law and under Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act.	
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range	4-11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	208
Appropriate authority	The board of directors
Chair of the local academy committee	Sarah Price
Principal	Andrew Carry
Telephone number	01384 818325
Website address	www.st-jo-st.dudley.sch.uk
Email address	info@st-jo-st.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25th -26th November 2013

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary Academy is a one form entry Catholic primary school. It serves the parish of Our Lady and All Saints in the Norton area of Stourbridge.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 94%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with 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 well below the national average.
- Attainment on entry is in line with national expectations.
- Since the last inspection, the school has become part of the St Nicholas Owen MAC. A new principal and vice principal (who is also the Religious Education subject leader) have been appointed. A new parish priest and chair of the academy committee have also been appointed.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors – Mary Daniels and Maureen O'Leary.
- 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 Religious Education lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- 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 principal, the Religious Education subject leader, the parish priest and with a group of governors (including the chair of governors and the chair of the board of directors).
- The inspectors attended a whole school Mass and undertook a learning walk to look at Collective Worship across the school, aspects of learning and teaching in Religious Education, 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, Analyse School Performance (ASP) data, the school development plan, the Religious Education action plan, teachers' planning and learning journals.