



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

ST TERESA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Butlers Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham, B20 2NY

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| Inspection date | 9 th & 10 th November 2017 |
| Reporting Inspector | Debbie Huxtable |
| Assistant Inspector | Marie Conway |

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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| Type of School | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4 – 11 years |
| Number on roll | 212 |
| Appropriate authority | The Governing Body |
| Chair of Governors | Mr Stephen McPhillips |
| Telephone number | 0121 554 9581 |
| E-mail address | enquiry@stteresa.bham.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 26 th & 27 th November 2012 |
| DFE School Number | 330/3365 |
| Unique Reference Number | 103456 |

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| Headteacher | Mr Declan Corkery |
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| Previous inspection: | Outstanding |
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| This inspection: | Good |
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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. Some 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, the school chaplain, the headteacher, the RE subject lead and headteachers from the Caritas Christi Partnership.
- The inspector attended a whole school Mass, collective 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 data (ASP), the school development plan, RE Action Plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals.

Information about the school

- St. Teresa's is a one-form entry primary school situated in the parish of St. Teresa in the Handsworth area of Birmingham.
- The school draws from a wide geographical area with a broad ethnic mix. Children come from many ethnic and cultural backgrounds and there is no numerically dominant group.
- At present 48.6% of the school population are baptised Catholic and this has been on the increase in recent years.
- The percentage of pupils that come from minority ethnic origins is well above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is slightly below the national average as is the number of disadvantaged pupils.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is slightly above 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 school has addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection.

Main Findings

- The provision for Catholic life, collective worship and religious education at St Teresa's Catholic Primary School are all good.
- The leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and RE subject leader demonstrate total commitment to the school and its Catholic mission.
- Staff, pupils, parents and governors are proud of this Catholic school and how its diverse community comes together in harmony.

- Collective worship is a strength of the school and pupils are enthusiastic and engaged in a variety of forms of worship that cater for pupils of different ages and experience.
- Pupils are well behaved and respectful, they take on responsibilities and want to help others both around the school and in the wider community through their charity work.
- Most staff have good RE subject knowledge. Teachers strive to make their lessons motivational and interesting so that all pupils, irrespective of their personal faith, are grounded in the teachings of the Gospels.
- Senior leaders know the school well and self-evaluation is ongoing and effectively feeds into the school development planning cycle.
- St Teresa's Catholic Primary School works successfully with a large group of local schools called Caritas Christi. This is a strong partnership that enables the schools to work together to develop all aspects of Catholic life, collective worship and RE.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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

- Provision and outcomes for pupils' Catholic life, collective worship and spiritual, moral and vocational development are all good.
- The school has a welcoming environment where pupils feel happy, safe and well cared for. They come together from a wide variety of cultures, and backgrounds but show respect and consideration of others in their daily lives around the school.
- Pupils recognise and celebrate their differences and feel it is important to respect and value everyone irrespective of their faith background. They enjoy learning about other faiths and sharing their diverse religious beliefs.
- Pupils learn about other faiths and religions through a planned programme of activities across school, as well as through some visits to other places of worship.
- The school has worked hard to develop pupils' understanding of vocations through lessons, displays, visits to Oscott and visiting speakers. Pupils are able to articulate that, *"we all have a calling from God"*.
- Pupils enjoy and appreciate the Catholic life of the school and contribute regularly to its evaluation through questionnaires and feedback to staff. Through the School Council and Faith Ambassadors they feel that they are listened to and their ideas are acted upon by the school. For example, pupils asked for holy water dishes in each classroom so that they could be used during their prayers and collective worship. This was agreed by leadership and acted upon.
- Displays of the virtues promoted in the Catholic Schools Pupil Profile (CSPP) are prominent throughout the school and feed into a rolling programme of assemblies and collective worship. However, pupils understanding of how these virtues impact on our daily lives lacked the appropriate depth. Pupils would benefit from further work on these in their lessons.
- Pupils are prepared for the sacraments in school with focused lessons and parental meetings. The sacraments are celebrated in the parish annually for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion and bi-annually for Confirmation.
- The school is well supported by the parish priest and the retired deacon also visits the school. However, there are few occasions when the school and parish work together and opportunities for pupils to witness to their faith in the parish are missed.
- Pupils are committed to fundraising for a variety of charities including CAFOD, Father Hudson's, Macmillan Cancer and local food banks. One pupil was able to articulate that they do this, *"because Jesus said we must love one another"*. However, not all pupils were able to link their actions back to the Catholic life of the school and what it means to be a Catholic.

- Collective worship is a strength of the school and staff have worked hard, particularly in the last year, to further develop collective worship and to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of their age are able to experience meaningful and inspiring liturgies.
- Retreat days are an important opportunity for pupils to reflect as they prepare to receive the sacraments and these special occasions are planned into the sacramental programme. Pupils in Year 3 go to St. Mary's Convent and pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 go to St. Chad's Cathedral.
- Prayer is a priority for staff and they gather for daily prayer led by individual members of staff. Support and special consideration is offered to those staff with less confidence. Staff had the opportunity of a retreat day as part of the Caritas Christi In Urbe group of schools. All members of staff felt this to be beneficial and inspiring. There are plans to repeat this on a regular basis and further develop it.
- The school tries to engage with parents and encourage prayer at home by using prayer bags. This diocesan initiative has been extended by the school and all classes now have a bag of their own. Pupils enjoy taking these home to use with their families. Feedback received shows they are enjoyed and appreciated by both parents and pupils.
- Collective worship has a high priority in the school and is timetabled for all classes. Staff are skilled at using music, ICT, hymns, readings and spontaneous prayer to encourage pupils to reflect and respond to God through prayer. Stations of the Cross, the Rosary and a Lenten road show are just a few ways in which pupils experience a variety of liturgies that engage and inspire them.
- All classrooms and communal areas around the school have a prayer focus which display the correct liturgical colours. Artefacts and statues are also used to encourage the personal prayer of the pupils.
- Staff are well supported by the RE subject leader. She provides a termly information pack with key information to help staff who are less confident about the traditions of the Church.
- Traditional prayers of the Church are displayed in all classes. However, pupils are not given opportunities to learn and use all of the traditional prayers recommended by the diocese for each year group. Staff are over reliant on the more common prayers.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and showed an outstanding level of engagement during the celebration of the Eucharist. They took pride in their roles in the choir, or as instrumentalists, altar servers and readers. All pupils responded well to the prayers and responses of the Mass; singing was joyful, enthusiastic and emotional. The importance of the celebration of Mass was evidenced by even the youngest pupils who showed respect and reverence throughout.
- Behaviour of pupils throughout the inspection was good and showed respect to both adults and other children alike. They have a well-formed understanding of right and wrong and how important forgiveness is in developing our relationships with God and each other. One pupil expressed this when he told inspectors, *"God always has his arms open to forgive you."*
- Some classes are successfully piloting the use of class folders which combine evidence of Catholic life and collective worship and the variety of activities in RE lessons. These are a very effective record of provision and provide excellent opportunities for self-evaluation by teachers and pupils.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and Collective Worship

- Leadership of Catholic life and collective worship is good.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the RE Lead, are committed to the Church's mission and how this can be lived out in this very diverse local community.

- Governors are dedicated and highly committed to the school and its mission and they are developing their ability to identify areas for improvement to both support and challenge the school.
- The headteacher reports regularly to governors on the Catholic life and collective worship of the school through the headteacher's report. They have accurately identified a need for governors to play a greater role in self-evaluation and be better informed about the standards and outcomes for pupils in RE. This has led to a revised committee structure to incorporate an ethos committee which will enable more detailed reporting and evaluation.
- The RE subject leader is very experienced and enthusiastic about her role. She is hardworking and committed and sees her recent inclusion onto the senior leadership team as a positive development for both herself and the school.
- Membership of the Caritas Christi groups of schools has had a clear impact on all aspects of school life but especially Catholic life and collective worship. Headteachers plan, share ideas and provide opportunities for the schools to learn from each other and provide challenge and support.
- Training and networking for staff is also offered across the Caritas Christi schools including encouraging all staff to gain the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) and offering support through school to do this. Consequently, most staff in school either have, or are studying for the CCRS, and this is evidenced through good staff RE subject knowledge.
- Through the annual self-evaluation cycle the school identifies a key target for whole school development and this is then used to inform performance management targets for staff. Through data analysis and other monitoring activities the RE subject leader identifies any other areas for improvement in the RE action plan.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- The leadership, provision and outcomes for pupils in RE are all good.
- Leadership of RE is strong and shows good capacity to improve and act upon recommendations.
- Tracking of pupil performance is embedded and trends and cohort data is analysed by the RE subject leader and senior leadership. This is shared with staff and is beginning to be used to inform lesson planning.
- Moderation of pupils' work in RE across the school and with other schools takes place at least termly. Through this the school has accurately identified that standards in books do not always match teacher assessments of pupils. A plan to support individual staff is now in place to ensure that assessment is more accurate and based on evidence.
- The RE subject leader uses assessment data to identify vulnerable groups in RE. Recent analysis has correctly identified boys as an underachieving group. Interviews with pupils then showed that boys are able to articulate their learning in RE, but their writing skills limit their ability to record their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and they provide a variety of activities in their lessons to motivate pupils' learning. However, in some classes the activities do not give pupils enough opportunities to reflect and develop their deeper thinking through longer pieces of writing.
- Pupils enjoy their RE lessons and believe they help them, *"to learn about God and new things about him."* They look forward to using the Bible and have a good knowledge of stories from both the Old and New Testament. They are keen to learn, and can work independently or collaboratively with other pupils.

- Productivity and presentation of pupils' work in their books is inconsistent across classes and does not match that of other subjects. Leadership had already identified these areas for development and the RE subject leader is working with some staff. However, raising expectations of pupils and especially the more able pupils is an area the school will need to address with some urgency.
- Most pupils begin school well below expectations in RE and some have few language skills. The school administers a baseline assessment in RE and then re-assesses at the end of Reception to ensure progress is made against the key areas assessed.
- Marking and feedback in RE books is inconsistent across the school. Although pupils are able to explain the highlighting technique that is used in some books, many are unable to identify ways to improve their work or deepen their understanding. Where a few staff do use developmental comments, there is little evidence of appropriate responses from pupils. As a result, key opportunities to deepen pupils' learning are lost.
- Pupil progress and attainment in RE for most pupils is in line with diocesan expectations. However, a significant minority of pupils do not meet diocesan expectations.
- Support staff provide good input and are skilled and well deployed to support learning and teaching. They demonstrate good subject knowledge, and some can skilfully extend learning and clarify misconceptions.
- The curriculum is based on the diocesan scheme "Living and Growing as the People of God." The school uses recommended diocesan planning and assessment formats.
- The school has worked with staff on effective planning and there is now a more consistent approach across all classes. Where appropriate, staff adapt their planning to meet the needs of their pupils. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to learn from RE and to ask and answer question of meaning and purpose (AT2).
- Teaching observed in lessons and drop-ins showed staff accurately using and developing key vocabulary as identified in the units of work. Pupils responded positively to this, particular in Key Stage 1, and were keen to show that not only were learning new words, but knew the meanings too.
- Relationships and Sex Education is taught in accordance with the teachings of the Church.
- The school meets all its canonical expectations in regards to RE curriculum time and content.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- Develop the pupils' understanding of what it means to be a Catholic school and how the actions and teachings of Jesus impact on our daily lives.
- Promote school and parish collaboration, so that pupils and their families have greater opportunity to be part of the parish community.
- Raise standards in RE by:
 - providing consistent feedback in pupils' books that further develops learning;
 - having higher expectations of productivity and presentation;
 - requiring more in depth pieces of work which show pupils' learning from RE (AT2).