



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

ST TERESA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stone Road, Trent Vale, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 6SP

Inspection date 13th & 14th July 2017
Reporting Inspector Maureen O'Leary

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Academy
Age range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Number on roll	349
Appropriate authority	The Board of Directors
Chair of Governors	Emma Whittingham
Telephone number	01782 235005
E-mail address	stteresa@ctkcc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 nd May 2012
DFE School Number	861/3410
Unique Reference Number	140804

Headteacher **Nathan Price**

Previous inspection: Good

This inspection: Good

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



MAKING CHRIST KNOWN TODAY

Evidence

Information about the school

- St Teresa's Catholic Primary School is a larger than average primary school with a nursery that serves the parish of St Teresa and the areas of Trent Vale, Oakhill, Hanford, Trentham and Newcastle.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than the national average.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 90%.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The number of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) is broadly in line with the national average.
- Attainment on entry is in line with national expectations.
- The school is part of a multi-academy company (MAC) with St John Fisher Catholic College and three other local Catholic primary schools. Since the last inspection a new headteacher, a deputy headteacher and a RE subject lead have been appointed.

Main Findings

- St Teresa's Catholic Primary School is a community that succeeds in its mission to bear witness to the teachings of Jesus Christ and to help its pupils grow closer to God.
- The provision and outcomes for pupils in regards to Catholic life, RE and collective worship are all securely good with a number of outstanding features.
- The relationship between the school and St Teresa's church is very strong. The members of both these parts of the parish see themselves firmly as one community.
- The contribution of the Indian Keralan and Filipino families to the Catholic life of the school is resolutely acknowledged and celebrated by the pupils, staff, parents and the parish.
- The leadership of the school's Catholic life and collective worship is good. Senior leaders firmly support the Catholic ethos of the school. To improve further they now need to embark on more rigorous and systematic monitoring and evaluation.
- The Catholic life of the school has a very powerful impact on pupils who proudly proclaim their faith both at school and in the wider community.
- The devout, weekly celebration of the Eucharist centres the school community in a life of prayer.
- Pupils appreciate and value all aspects of collective worship that the school provides. They are growing in confidence to plan and lead collective worship.
- RE in the school is enjoyed by pupils and enables them to meet and often exceed diocesan expectations. The teaching and learning provided by staff enables children to routinely apply their learning in RE to daily life.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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

- The Catholic life of the school and pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. Pupils' vocational development is good.

- Pupils, staff, parents and governors highly value the Catholic ethos of the school. This was exemplified by the blessing of the school principal, by the parish priest during a whole school Mass, as he began his new leadership role in the school.
- Under the patronage of St Teresa and through their devotion to her, the pupils have a deep understanding of how to live as Christians. They regularly use the life of St Teresa and her *Little Way* to guide and shape their actions. They recognise that each little act done with love brings them into a closer relationship with Jesus.
- The implementation of the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile has had a significant impact on the views and behaviours of all pupils. The whole school acknowledges and rewards pupils who live out the profile at weekly celebration assemblies. One pupil, reflecting the view of many pupils, expressed how they had worked hard to be intentional and prophetic so that they could tell others about Jesus. End of year awards of medals are highly prized and valued by pupils. As a result, pupils demonstrate strong Catholic Christian virtues and values.
- The adoption of Saint Francis of Assisi, St Cecelia, St John the apostle and St Joan of Arc, as the patrons of the school house teams, has further inspired pupils to live their lives according to Catholic Christian virtues and values.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding both within and outside of the classroom. They routinely treat each other and adults with the highest respect.
- St Teresa's school is an active and intrinsic member of a vibrant parish. The school played a major role in planning and supporting the recent parish mission. The school council composed the mission prayer; the hugely successful roadshow (an activity suggested by the school's leadership) of all the varied parish groups was held in the school hall; the school also designed a rosary banner to display in the church.
- The parish priest is a frequent visitor to the school. He not only visits to say Mass each week but often makes additional visits to sacramental classes.
- Members of the parish regularly attend the parish Mass held in the school each Thursday and support pupils with reading in class. Enthusiastic members of the parish Legion of Mary also attend the school each week. They lead three very popular rosary groups which are held at lunchtime.
- Pupils from the school regularly act as altar servers and readers at parish Masses. As a result, both parts of the parish feel included and valued by the other.
- The various ethnic groups within the school integrate extremely well. Pupils value and express strongly their respect for each other. One pupil explained how her Keralan friend's decision to read her bible each night, while on the school trip to France, encouraged all the other girls in that group to follow her example.
- The school has a strong tradition of charitable outreach to support Catholic charities such as CAFOD and Fr Hudson's. A number of charities are also supported as a result of pupil initiative. The school council has developed a link with the Donna Louise Children's Hospice. Year 6 pupils engaged in an enterprise challenge to raise funds for this charity. They produced artwork for a friendship tree at the hospice and some pupils visited the hospice with the principal.
- Following a science topic on water and a discussion with the principal during an assembly, pupils also decide to support Wateraid. The school's adoption of water coolants throughout the school contributes funds to this charity.
- Pupils have a good understanding that they are called to serve others and that God is calling them to a particular vocation. Through attendance at the Deanery Vocation's Mass by a selection of pupils and participating in a competition for the local vocations group, this understanding of vocation is stronger in Key Stage 2. The school now needs to find ways to develop further an understanding of vocation in Key Stage 1.
- Collective worship in the school is good with some outstanding features.

- The school sees the celebration of the Mass as a priority. They are strongly supported by the parish priest who commits to saying a parish Mass in school each week.
- Pupils' attendance at Mass is marked by their reverent behaviour and devout prayers. This devotion to the Eucharist was extremely evident during the inspection as pupils returned from receiving Holy Communion. Heads bowed and eyes closed, they spent considerable time in stillness and reflection. Pupils take the fullest possible part in the Mass through their: responses; well-prepared reading of the liturgy of the Word; participation in the offertory; and as musicians and singers. As a result, the Eucharist is firmly at the heart of the community.
- As well as the celebration of Mass, the school also provides a comprehensive variety of regular collective worship for pupils to attend on a weekly basis. This includes a Monday gospel assembly, phase assemblies and a celebration assembly.
- Weekly class liturgies are prayerful and reflective and they are increasingly led by pupils, especially in Key Stage 2. Staff are successfully introducing a number of different prayer styles to pupils which have been demonstrated by the RE subject lead at staff prayer times. Pupils greatly value these experiences. The school has rightly identified the increased preparation and leadership of class liturgies by pupils of all ages as an area of development.
- Pupils take part in regular prayer times throughout the school day, which includes saying the angelus at midday. Pupils have a good knowledge of traditional prayers.
- Throughout the year pupils have the opportunity to participate in: four Holy Week liturgies; a crowning of Mary service; a Harvest Mass; a crib service; as well as the celebration of the feast days of St Teresa and St Thomas (the patron saint of Kerala).
- Pupils are well prepared for the sacraments by the school. The parish priest provides excellent support to the pupils who are preparing to receive the sacraments. He often visits them in their classrooms and always contributes to sacramental meetings for parents. The whole school attends a penitential service in the parish church prior to pupils receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Sacramental preparation for confirmation includes Catholic pupils who do not attend the school and this is much appreciated by the parish catechist. This results in a spirit of inclusivity about the sacramental life of the school.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and Collective Worship

- The leadership of the school's Catholic life and collective worship is good.
- Senior leaders firmly support the Catholic ethos of the school and ensure it is given priority.
- The school has undertaken some formal monitoring such as a pupil questionnaire, pupil reflection sheets after phase assemblies and class collective worship observations. The thorough evaluation of this monitoring by the RE subject lead has directly informed improvement planning for the school.
- Senior leaders of the school have ensured that both the MAC development plan and staff performance management targets have a specific Catholic life objective. This has focused the school on strategic improvement in this area.
- The principal and vice principal now need to take a more strategic lead in the monitoring and evaluation of Catholic life and collective worship. A clear schedule needs to be implemented and key objectives (identified from any evaluations) should be part of the whole school development plan, as well as the RE action plan and MAC development plan.

- The RE and Catholic life link governor, who is also the parish priest, is routinely in school each week. This active involvement in the life of the school enables him to have an understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. He has also taken part in formal monitoring with the RE subject lead on matters of Catholic life.
- The governing body are informed about the Catholic life and collective worship of the school through the RE and Catholic life link governor's feedback and the principal's reports. At present the principal's reports focus on provision rather than evaluation. The inclusion of a specific Catholic life objective in the school development plan will enable governors to conduct a more rigorous diagnosis of the school's strengths and areas for development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- The leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education are good with some outstanding features.
- The subject of RE is given priority by senior leaders and they have enabled the RE subject lead to effectively carry out her role. This has enabled her to undertake some very good evaluation of a range of monitoring activities. In addition to the review of assessment data, this evaluation has enabled the subject lead to clearly identify the strengths and areas for development in RE.
- Outcomes for pupils in RE are good and the large majority of pupils achieve in line with diocesan expectations. A significant number of pupils exceed diocesan expectations.
- The school has correctly identified that on average boys' attainment in RE is below that of girls.
- Attainment of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is below that of other pupils in foundation stage. However, targeted teaching in foundation stage and Key Stage 1, ensures that pupils with EAL make very good progress. Consequently, by Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils with EAL consistently achieve above diocesan expectations.
- Staff plan lessons well and are committed to providing high quality lessons for pupils. They constantly seek and follow advice from the RE subject lead to improve teaching and learning. There is a strong culture of staff working and planning together. This is particularly effective in Key Stage 1, where staff share subject knowledge and pedagogy.
- Pupils are provided with a range of activities that engage them. As a result, the pupils clearly enjoy RE. Through a recent questionnaire pupils have identified that they enjoy using drama as a way to engage with learning in RE. The enthusiastic engagement of pupils in drama was evident during the inspection. The school has subsequently identified the use of drama as a key priority in next year's RE action plan.
- One Year 6 class in particular make good use of religious art to stimulate discussion and deepen pupils' understanding of key biblical events. This could be developed throughout the school.
- Many of the tasks and questions teachers set require pupils to not only learn about religion but to ponder on the meaning of religion. They are constantly challenged to

explain how their learning in RE impacts on the way they live their lives. Pupils in a Year 3 class were confident when explaining how they can carry out the words of St Teresa of Avila - *Christ has no hands on earth but ours*. Pupils' reflection on the meaning and purpose of religion is a real strength of the school.

- Pupils' learning in RE significantly impacts on the parish community. Parents report that pupils regularly come home and discuss their RE lessons and evangelise to their parents.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes and behaviours to learning. They are able to carry out teacher led activities, to work collaboratively and, increasingly with age, to work independently.
- Staff, in accordance with the school's marking policy, provided regular feedback to pupils about their successes in RE and how to improve their work further. In a number of cases this feedback provides a rich dialogue with pupils that challenges their thinking and deepens their knowledge.
- Unit markers are being used in some classes in Key Stage 2 to assist assessment for learning. This good practice could now be extended throughout the school.
- Through an annual multi-cultural week and ongoing activities throughout the year pupils have a good awareness of other faiths. This has also led to pupils developing a sense of respect for other faiths and beliefs.
- The school is currently improving its Relationships and Sexual Education for pupils, using resources that are in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church. This area of the curriculum will need to be subject to an ongoing review.
- Governors have oversight of RE and fulfil their statutory and canonical responsibilities well. The school follows the diocesan strategy for RE *Growing and Learning as People of God*.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- Establish a schedule for the monitoring and evaluation of Catholic life that will inform the school development plan and involve all stakeholders.
- To increase the use of art and drama in RE to enhance teaching and learning for all pupils (especially boys and pupils with English as an additional language).
- To increase pupil planned and led collective worship for all ages.