



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## Section 48 Inspection

### **OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Hawthorn Lane, Tile Hill, Coventry, CV4 9LB**

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Inspection date 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2017  
Reporting Inspector Sister Susan Collins

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	235
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Mr Tony Kiely
Telephone number	02476 466655
E-mail address	admin@ourlady.coventry.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2012
DFE School Number	331/3408
Unique Reference Number	103712

**Headteacher Mrs Kate Connelly**

Previous inspection: Good

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 3 RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of these lessons were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- 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 of governors, the headteacher, the deputy and the parish priest.
- The inspector was invited to attend the First Holy Communion Mass at the weekend prior to the inspection, and also attended a whole school assembly, a May Procession 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' achievement and progress, RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals.

## **Information about the school**

- The school is one form entry and is situated in the Parish of Our Lady of the Assumption, Tile Hill, Coventry.
- The percentage of ethnic minority pupils is in line with the national average.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 71%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- Attainment on entry is below typical and this is reflected in the RE baseline where pupils enter school with limited knowledge of the Catholic faith.
- The RE subject leader is currently on maternity leave and the headteacher has taken on the role in her absence.

## **Main Findings**

- The headteacher, the deputy and the chair of governors are a dedicated team focused on the Catholic life of the school. They share their faith in a tangible way so that the rest of the staff support them in their drive to do the very best for the children in their care.
- The welcoming mission of the school is evident everywhere and staff and pupils live out this mission on a daily basis.
- Our Lady of the Assumption School provides a loving, caring and secure family atmosphere where relationships are exemplary.
- The teaching of RE is good with some outstanding teaching.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning in RE.
- The introduction of Christian meditation across the school has improved the prayer life of the school, providing the children with the opportunity to become one with Christ.

- Pupils from their earliest years need to be given more opportunities to plan and lead collective worship.
- The Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile is strongly promoted throughout the school in lessons and collective worship. Children are able to share the virtues they had learnt about in several different contexts.
- The leaders of the school and the governors are aware of the strengths and areas of development for the school in relation to its 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**

- The provision and outcomes for pupils in respect of Catholic life, spiritual, moral and vocational development is good, and collective worship is good with some elements that are outstanding.
- Senior leaders promote the Catholic ethos in many ways and it is obvious that Our Lady's is a Catholic school from the moment you enter the school site. There is a statue of Our Lady in a prominent position and an RE area in the Reception outdoor learning space.
- The environment across the school is rich in artefacts, displays and symbols of the Faith, which all help to support the Catholic life of the school.
- Prayer areas in all classrooms reflect the liturgical season. On each focus there is a tree where the prayers that the children have written are displayed.
- 'Elizabeth Wang' paintings displayed in the school hall and classrooms are used as a stimulus for reflection, prayer and discussion. In one lesson observed, the children reflected on why Our Lady was portrayed as sorrowful.
- The school uses many informal observations of Catholic life. A more formal process, the Catholic Ethos Survey, was used in May 2017. Audits need to be planned and regularly carried out which would then affirm what the school is doing well and priorities for further development can be identified and incorporated into the school development plan.
- The school has very good systems in place to support those children who face challenges in their daily lives by employing additional staff to support their pastoral needs; creating for them a secure and safe environment in which to learn.
- Pupils value and participate well in the Catholic life of the school. They know why their school is special.
- The recently formed chaplaincy team, consisting of Year 5 pupils, meets weekly and is developing ways of supporting prayer times across the school. They have recently been involved in observing prayer in other classes. They are a committed group of pupils who want to spread the word of God and see their role as encouraging others to do the same.
- The pupils in the chaplaincy team are keen to develop and express their own faith and have been reflecting upon some of the mysteries of the Catholic faith, particularly in the aftermath of the terrorist attack in Manchester.
- The school established a Mini Vinnie's Group during the Year of Mercy which supports the local community, provides afternoon tea for the parishioners and has become an important part of the school.
- Year 6 pupils take their role as buddies to the Reception class pupils very seriously. They provide excellent faith models to these pupils as they sit with them during the celebration of the Mass.
- The behaviour of the pupils throughout the school is outstanding. They treat each other and all adults with respect.

- The Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile has been promoted in the school and has been developed in line with diocesan expectations. Pupils can share the meaning of these values and virtues and how they influence their words and actions.
- Provision for collective worship is good with some outstanding elements. The celebration of the Mass is a central part of school life. Children respond both enthusiastically and with confidence. They enjoy singing and appreciate the wider variety of hymns that have been introduced into the school. This was evident at the First Holy Communion Mass celebrated on the day before the inspection.
- The pupils enjoy the retreats provided by 'One Life Music' which are held in school. These retreats allow the pupils to explore their beliefs in creative ways.
- There are regular opportunities for pupils to use traditional and spontaneous prayer. They especially enjoy and respond well to Christian meditation which has been recently introduced to the school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of some of the traditional prayers of the Church. They pray regularly the Hail Holy Queen and the children know why this prayer is particularly important in their school. The school is currently addressing gaps in the traditional prayers that children in Upper Key Stage 2 should know.
- Class prayer journals are used to record prayers that have been written as part of the pupils' RE work or to record prayer events during the year.
- Praying in other languages has also added another dimension to the profile of prayer. During the May Procession, children prayed in three different languages.
- Sacramental preparation is well planned and benefits all children. Parents appreciate the support they receive at sacramental meetings.
- The school is a place of evangelisation as two members of staff, parents and children have been received into the Church during the last two years.
- Governors are involved in monitoring the Catholic life and collective worship of the school in many informal ways and are now involved in more formal processes. The chair of governors is very well informed. He supports the chaplaincy team and has monitored collective worship and reports his findings to the main governing body. These reports give the governors a clear understanding of strengths and the areas for development.

## **LEADERSHIP**

### **Leadership of Catholic life and Collective Worship**

- Leadership of Catholic life and collective worship is good with some outstanding elements.
- The headteacher has a clear understanding of her role in the leadership of Catholic life of the school and is fully supported by her deputy and the governing body. She is committed to ensuring that the children have a rich and meaningful experience of the Catholic life, which helps each child come to know and live their lives according to the teachings of Jesus.
- The governors and the staff of Our Lady of the Assumption are committed to ensuring that the school becomes a flourishing centre of Catholic lifelong learning. The responsibility for self-evaluation is shared by all stakeholders committed to their vision for the school, which is to provide a high quality, purposeful and transforming Catholic education for the community that they serve.
- For the last two academic years, the subject leader has presented an informative end of year report to governors; the headteacher includes a section in her termly report to governors on Catholic life. These reports clearly inform the governors of the achievements and areas for development.

- Senior leaders are committed to the further development of staff both personally and professionally. In the next cycle of appraisal, it is planned that all staff will have a performance management target linked to the Catholic life of the school.
- Senior leaders have put into place support for newly qualified staff which includes attendance at diocesan training. As a result, staff are well supported and know the diocesan expectations of what it means to work in a Catholic school.
- The relationship between the governors and senior staff is strong. The support and challenge they provide enables the school to continually improve. The chair of governors is a regular visitor in school and he appreciates the dedication of the leadership team. He often conveys his thanks in letters to the school which are greatly appreciated by the staff and children. Ideas for further development are shared in a positive way so that faith in the school is relevant to the pupils and their families.
- School leaders and governors have ensured that the school action plan adequately reflects the Catholic mission of the school.
- The school is part of the Unity Partnership of Catholic schools in the west and south of Coventry providing a range of school to school support.
- The parish priest works closely with the headteacher and staff in school and is a great support to the school community.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education**

- The provision of religious education at Our Lady of the Assumption is good with some outstanding elements.
- RE is very well led by the headteacher whilst the subject leader is on maternity leave.
- The teaching of RE is good with a proportion that is outstanding. The senior leaders are developing ways of supporting teaching and learning so that a greater proportion of lessons can become outstanding in time.
- Planning is good across the school and in line with diocesan expectations. It is detailed, takes account of previous learning and includes a range of activities for the pupils to undertake.
- Monitoring had been given a high profile in line with other subjects. Leaders have monitored the provision and outcomes for RE through a range of activities including, lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny and pupil interviews.
- Questioning of pupils during lessons is a strong feature of RE; this enables pupils to think about their prior learning and to ask and answer questions at a deeper level. In one of the outstanding lessons observed, pupils made very good progress because they were actively involved in their learning and were able to reflect on passages from scripture and make links to their everyday life.
- Teacher subject knowledge of RE is good. Consequently, pupils' knowledge of Bible stories and their use of appropriate subject knowledge is also good.
- Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants who demonstrate good subject knowledge and effectively support learning.
- Marking and feedback is in line with other core subjects and pupils know how to make improvements to their work. Teachers regularly provide challenging questions during lessons and in some classes this is also reflected in their RE books.
- On entry, knowledge of the faith is limited but by the end of Key Stage 1, the children have made good progress and this continues through to the end of Key Stage 2.

- Assessment procedures in RE have improved; tracking of pupil performance is embedded and trends and cohort data have been analysed.
- The RE curriculum is broad and balanced. It is thoughtfully planned with clear links to the *Curriculum Directory* and the diocesan programme, *Learning and Growing as the People of God*, and is accessible to all.
- The curriculum provides very good opportunities for spiritual and moral development and good opportunities for vocational development. The pupils know that their God given talents are to be used to benefit others. The Year 6 children participate in the Coventry Catholic Schools' Vocation Mass and appreciate the visit from religious sisters.
- The school has a clear plan for teaching about other religions and is developing a partnership with Holbrook's Primary School where the greater majority of the pupils are Muslim. Shared work has provided opportunities for the children to gain a greater understanding of Islam.
- Work on other religions was beautifully displayed in the main entrance of the school.
- The governors fulfil their statutory and canonical responsibilities in regards to RE. They ensure that the requirements of the *Bishops' Conference* are met in terms of curriculum time for RE and the priority that RE is given in the school.
- The teaching of relationships and sex education is in accordance with the Catholic Church and is delivered sensitively to meet the needs of pupils of all ages.

## **Recommendations**

### **In order to improve the school should:**

- Enhance the quality of teaching and learning in RE so that a greater proportion is outstanding.
- Strengthen the processes for the evaluation of the Catholic life of the school to provide a secure basis for targeted forward planning.
- Build on the developing good practice in the school so that all children have the opportunity to regularly prepare and lead collective worship in a variety of gatherings.