



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## INSPECTION REPORT

### ST ELIZABETH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Elizabeth's Road, Foleshill, Coventry, CV6 5BX

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Inspection dates	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> March 2015
Reporting Inspector	Teresa Quick

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	203
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Miss Ann Harkin
Telephone number	024 76687527
E-mail address	admin@st-elizabeths.coventry.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	February 2009
DFE School Number	331/3405
Unique Reference Number	103710

<b>Headteacher</b>	<b>Peter Burke</b>
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Previous inspection:	1
This inspection:	3

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## **Evidence**

- The inspection was carried out by 1 Diocesan Inspector.
- The focus of the inspection was on the effectiveness and use of the school's self evaluation of religious education (RE) and Catholic life.
- To validate the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation of teaching and learning, the inspector observed 3 RE lessons with the headteacher.
- The inspector completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time.
- Meetings were held with the chair of governors, the headteacher, parish priest, and members of staff.
- The inspector observed a class prayer service, attended Mass and collective worship for the whole school 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.
- Other documents such as RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals were read alongside the self evaluation.

## **Information about the school**

- St Elizabeth's is a smaller than average size Catholic primary school serving the parish of St Elizabeth, in Foleshill, in the City of Coventry.
- The school serves an area of low cost private housing and social housing. There is high social and economic deprivation. It is an area of high, mostly short term immigration and thus the school has a high mobility of pupils
- The number of Catholic pupils is currently 62% which is broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection.
- The proportion of ethnic minority pupils is very high with over half of the pupils having English as an additional language.
- The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average as are the numbers with special needs and/or disabilities.
- Attainment on entry is well below the national average overall.
- At the time of the inspection there were severe staffing problems impacting on the Catholic teaching within the school.
- There is now a substantive headteacher but there had been an interim structure with an executive headteacher.

## **Main Findings**

- The judgement in the school's self evaluation is accurate in that Catholic life is good, but achievement in religious education is too low.
- St Elizabeth's School has a good Catholic life. In spite of a difficult few years the faith within the school continues to be strong St Elizabeth's School lives out its belief that religious education involves the education of the whole person.
- The Catholic ethos is strong within the school. Pupils show respect for one another and the adults with whom they come into contact. Pupils feel welcome in the school and have a remarkable pride in their faith whether it is Catholic, Hindu or Muslim

- The quality of collective worship and pupil involvement in collective worship is also good.
- The school works well to fully integrate and involve all pupils in school life especially as they come from diverse and cultural heritages. A large portion of pupils are of Indian, Pakistani, Polish or Black African heritage.
- The leadership has a good understanding of how the school can improve and as a result the school has good capacity to improve further.

## **School self evaluation**

### **Catholic Life and Collective Worship**

- Self evaluation is central to the drive towards improvement. The new leadership has an accurate understanding of where the school is now and the pathway to further improvement. While the school does not have a formal schedule for monitoring its Catholic life, monitoring both formally and informally is a normal part of all it does.
- The school judges the quality of its Catholic life accurately, but the evidence base to support this is limited in scope. The judgements made about Catholic life of the school are not sufficiently securely evidenced nor the product of diagnostic analysis
- Monitoring is still being developed and lacks consistent systems overall for the monitoring of procedures and practices. A consistent system across the whole school for pupils' evaluation of Catholic life has yet to be in place.
- Where necessary for the improvement of Catholic life, in-service provision and support material are provided for staff and future planning includes retreats for staff
- There has been no audit of Catholic life to establish areas for development and the inclusion of appropriate targets. Senior leaders evaluate the impact of the Catholic life of the school and outcomes and development of faith by questionnaires for parents and pupils in particular after key events and discussions with pupils and their general observations.
- Pupils benefit from the many long-held traditions of the practice of the faith continued in the school.
- The school mission statement has not been subject to review for some time but there is a more recently developed pupils' mission statement. The pupils understand the importance of the mission of the school.
- Collective worship is monitored by senior staff and informally by governors and the parish priest. The focus is more on what happens than on quality.
- Governors including the parish priest support the formal monitoring of the sacramental preparation and findings are acted upon to improve provision.
- Pupils are given a role of leading and organising some collective worship but there was no evidence seen that they share their views with the senior leaders. But pupils contribute to the overall evaluation process through the school council, surveys and daily contact with class teachers and teaching assistants.
- Senior leaders report regularly to governors about the Catholic life and the religious education, both formally in meetings and less formally during visits to the school.
- Catholic life and religious education have been led by various different co-ordinators over the past few years and, as a result consistency has been lacking. File evidence linked to classroom observation shows the subject leader has been effective in her direction and support.

## Governance

- Governors are committed to the school and its Catholicity. They are kept well informed by the headteacher and they recognise the quality of the ethos.
- As a result of governors visiting the school individually and on Governors' Day. They are developing an understanding of the present position of the school and the next steps towards improvement. They support the monitoring of the Catholic life both formally and informally in order that they can hold the school to account.
- The RE link governor maintains oversight of Catholic life of the school, and teaching and learning with his regular visits and meeting with the subject leader and providing a minuted report.
- Governors see the school as an important part of the local community and are keen to know the wishes of its members. A governor attends school council meetings and some governors make themselves available to meet parents after Sunday Mass.

## Religious Education

- The curriculum has not been reviewed and has some omissions. It is not personalised to meet the needs of the school and does not include vocational and teaching about other faiths.
- The subject leader has not yet established criteria for evaluating and coherence and impact of the curriculum for RE
- The school's judgement that teaching, learning and assessment in RE require improvement is reliable. When there was careful monitoring during the autumn term improvements were made which had a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Assessments are beginning to take shape but the school has no integrated structured approach to monitoring and evaluation. Systems of assessment are not embedded sufficiently to support the self evaluation cycle. The school accepts that they must fully extend the features of assessment for learning throughout all RE lessons to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.
- At the time of the last inspection to improve further the school was to fully extend the features of assessment for learning throughout all RE lessons to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. There has been a lack of monitoring of this action point and limited collated assessments found and the links to national standards found date back a number of years.
- Evidence from book trawls show that the work in the RE books is found to be lower than English. Findings were acted upon and expectations given.

## Overall effectiveness of the school<sup>1</sup>

- Pupils enter school with low knowledge of the faith. From conversations with pupils, lesson observation and book trawls pupils in Year 2 have not reached the levels expected for their age. By Year 6 pupils have reached an expected level of knowledge and understanding of the faith. Pupils who experience difficulties in learning get good support and achieve well
- Pupils are confident to talk about their beliefs, practice and learning in RE which support the school's judgements. They are articulate and confident. Most pupils remember what they have been taught. There is the potential for higher standards. Books do not show the same quality of knowledge and understanding as talking with the children.

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<sup>1</sup> As the quality of the school self evaluation has been affirmed, the judgements in this section of the report conform to those of the school.

- The curriculum has limitations. Though there is no teaching about other faiths the festivals of other religions are celebrated. The school cares for the pupils of other faiths and responds to their needs. All pupils have a remarkable pride in their faith whether Catholic, Hindu or Muslim. Pupils consider their beliefs are respected in the school.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school, but there is no vocational element to the curriculum..
- Marking in general is developmental. Where there is good marking this gives pupils the opportunity to improve their work and develop their religious knowledge and thinking.
- Pupils in Year 6 successfully extend their thinking skills and learning in RE pupils by joining philosophy group discussions with the parish priest.
- The school has high pupil mobility. Those who have been at the school throughout their primary years give every indication of achieving well in RE.
- There are high quality resources both in the classrooms and those held centrally.
- St Elizabeth's School has a good Catholic life successfully promoted by the headteacher and governors.
- Pupils enjoy taking an active role in planning and participating in collective worship and prayer services. The opportunities for children to take a lead in the Catholic life of the school are being developed.
- Pupils are taught the traditional prayers of the Church as well as writing and saying their own. They respond very well to all forms of prayer, Mass and collective worship. Behaviour during Mass and collective worship is excellent with pupils actively engaged. Links with parish in particular during the time of sacramental preparation are strong. Sacramental preparation is seen as a team effort by children, staff, some governors, clergy, parents and parish.
- Parents are supportive of the school with many attending the Year 2 collective worship and others joining the pupils and parishioners for Mass.
- Links to the other parish school and the high school to which many pupils transfer are very good.
- The school is active in charitable works with collections and fund-raising activities taking place for various different charities organised by various groups within the school.

### **Recommendations**

- The school should work towards consistency of leadership in RE. To ensure the continual development of the Catholic life and teaching and learning of RE a subject leader should be appointed at a level consistent with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- The school should review the curriculum for RE. It should meet the particular needs of the school and include vocational and teaching about other religions.
- Consistent systems of assessment should be developed further for RE to ensure clear progression and that each child will be taught in a way that is best suited to their needs.



21 March 2015

Diocesan Education Service,  
Don Bosco House,  
Coventry Road,  
Coleshill,  
B46 3EA

Dear Parents and Carers

**Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School, 2015**

I am writing this letter to share with you the findings of the diocesan inspection of your children's school. Diocesan inspection now explores in detail the school's own view of itself as expressed in its self-evaluation. For this reason, much of the report is more technical than used to be the case. You are still entitled to have a copy of the full report should you want one and it will be available on the school website or by request from the school office.

St Elizabeth's has a good Catholic life but is in need of improvement with the learning in Religious Education. This judgement is in agreement with the school's own self-evaluation. The school is going through a period of transition as the movement of staff has been significant. The headteacher, with strong governor support, considers the future to be positive. In spite of a few difficult years the faith in the school continues to be strong. Pupils benefit from the long held traditions of practice of the faith continued in the school. There are close links with the parish and the priest. Pupils enjoy taking an active role in planning and participating in collective worship. The school is active in charitable works with collections and fund raising activities. All teaching seen during the inspection was good. Very good links were made with pupils of other faiths thus making the lessons inclusive. Pupils orally give a better response to their learning than that found in their books. All speak confidently and are proud of their faith, whether they are Catholic, Hindu or Muslim. They understand the mission of the school. Spiritual and moral development is a strength of the school.

I recommended that the school work towards consistency of leadership in RE. As there are some areas where there are omissions in the curriculum, it should be adapted to meet the needs of the school and include vocational aspects and teaching about other faiths. Consistent systems of assessment should be developed so that it can be clearly seen how well each child is progressing

It was a pleasure and a privilege to spend time in your school. I was made really welcome by everyone. The pupils were confident and polite and are a credit to their parents and the school.

Yours sincerely

Teresa Quick  
Diocesan Inspector