



Archdiocese of Birmingham

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN BOSCO CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL SANDWELL

Inspection dates
Reporting Inspector

22nd - 23rd March 2012
Mr Dominic Collins

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Fr Timothy Burke
School address	Monmouth Drive West Bromwich B71 2ST
Telephone number	0121 556 0228
E-mail address	headteacher@st-johnbosco.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	May 2009
DFE School number	333/3303
Unique Reference Number	103991

Headteacher

Mr Edward Masterson

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



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 two full RE lessons, one with the headteacher and one with the RE subject leader. In addition the inspector completed a work scrutiny and held a discussion with pupils to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time. He held meetings with the parish priest/chair of governors, vice chair, staff, and parents. He observed a whole school assembly, a school Mass 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. He looked at a range of evidence related to the school's self evaluation such as RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals. Alongside the validation of school self evaluation, the inspector gathered evidence about collective worship, evidence which will be shared with other diocesan schools.

Information about the school

St John Bosco is an average sized Catholic primary school serving the parish of St Michael and Holy Cross in West Bromwich. There are currently 211 pupils on roll of whom 42% are baptised Catholics. The school is situated in a mixed socio-economic area of council and private housing. The majority of pupils are of white British origin with an increasing number, currently 42%, of other ethnic heritages. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average as is the proportion with special needs and/or disabilities. Attainment on entry is below the national average. The school is presently oversubscribed in all year groups including the morning and afternoon nursery classes. The school holds a number of awards, notably a full International School Award.

Main Finding

In its self evaluation St John Bosco judges itself to be an outstanding Catholic School where all staff and pupils can embrace the spiritual and moral values of the Gospel message through a shared commitment, understanding and practice of its distinctive Catholic mission. This underpins each school day and permeates the school environment. Religious education and the Catholic life of the school are considered to be excellent and pupils are fully engaged in their contribution to its Catholic character, by their positive attitude and sensitivity towards others. In each of these respects the school's judgements are justified.

The headteacher and senior leadership team are passionate about developing the RE and Catholic life of the school and together successfully communicate a clear vision to promote and enrich it, a vision shared by a highly professional and dedicated staff. School self evaluation is thorough and effective, brought about through the application of a firmly embedded monitoring programme, the outcomes of which are used to inform future planning. The school is very well supported by the governing body who are full involved in the Catholic life of the school and in the evaluation of its religious education.

School self evaluation

The extremely effective and well planned systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the Catholic life and the religious education at St John Bosco school, reflects the commitment, drive and excellent management skills of its leadership. It is clearly evident that striving to fulfil the Catholic mission of the school is the highest priority together with the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Each school year begins with a service

dedicated to the commitment by staff and children, to the core message of the school's mission 'Living, Learning and Growing in God's Family'. As a result; pupils, staff, governors and parents have a clear understanding of its purpose and are keen to embrace it. The school's evaluation of its Catholic life and RE is thorough and clearly identifies that the processes, including lesson observations, assessments of pupils' work, learning walks, questionnaires and audits of spiritual life and prayer are instrumental in shaping and developing its provision in these areas. Crucially, the outcomes and analysis of school self evaluation are central to the school RE improvement plan, which is shared and implemented at all levels.

School self evaluation is brought about as a result of a rigorous, structured programme that forms an ongoing cycle of monitoring, analysis and challenge. Within this cycle, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, who is also the RE subject leader, monitor the quality of teaching and learning through scrutiny of lesson planning, RE lesson observations and the quality and content of pupils' work. Careful records are kept and lesson feedback is shared with staff in a professional and constructive manner. Support staff are integral to the monitoring process, with whom identified strengths and areas for development are also shared. The accuracy of lesson judgements made by the school is fully supported by the outstanding quality of lessons observed during the inspection. Through a highly effective system of pupil tracking, closely monitored by the RE subject leader, individuals and groups of children who may be underachieving, are identified and if deemed to be in need of additional support, are targeted in order to enhance and sustain their progress. The excellent practice of regular pupil interviews and progress review, is an extremely effective facet of school self evaluation. Recent records of pupil interviews across the school reveal that children are developing a deeper knowledge and understanding of their faith, which they can discuss with some maturity. They are also eager to explore biblical stories and relate the significance of them to their own lives. There is clear evidence that this evaluation cycle informs staff planning in order to take children to their next developmental level.

The quality and outcomes of the RE curriculum are a major focus of the school's self evaluation process. Teachers communicate their faith through their enthusiasm and sound subject knowledge and are extremely successful in making RE lessons interesting and enjoyable. This is firmly acknowledged in recent pupil and parent questionnaires. Underpinning the high quality provision and outcomes for RE is the excellent organisation and support to all members of staff by the subject leader. The RE curriculum is closely monitored by her thus ensuring consistency of quality and opportunities are constantly being sought to enrich and develop it further. Monitoring of planning and scrutiny of the quality of pupils work enables leadership to evaluate progress linked to units of work, effectiveness of marking and access to the curriculum by all learners.

School evaluation is thorough, comprehensive and extremely effective and areas for development have been identified to focus in an ongoing plan to build upon the firmly established foundations of the present excellent practice. Leadership is outstanding and RE is exceptionally well led and managed by the subject leader, who supports a dedicated and highly professional staff team. Governors have a strong commitment to the Catholic life of the school and the chair, RE link governor and parish priest meet each week with the senior management team to discuss RE monitoring and planning. The parish priests are frequent visitors to the school and make a very significant contribution to the evaluation of its Catholic life and RE.

Overall effectiveness of the school¹

Outcomes for pupils in RE are excellent and there is evidence of a consistent momentum of improvement in their faith journey across each key stage. Relationships throughout the school are outstanding and consequently staff are very aware of pupils' individual needs. The 'every child matters' agenda is evident in all aspects of school life and this has a very significant impact on pupils' learning and their spiritual and moral development. Baseline data in RE on entry to the foundation stage reveals a well below level of practice and experience of the faith. The high quality teaching children receive is consistently effective and they show a keen interest and enthusiasm in their RE lessons. At the end of Key Stage 1, children show a good measure of progress and are working at average expectations. Building upon these early firm foundations, throughout Key Stage 2 progress accelerates rapidly and by the end of Year 6 standards of attainment rise above expectations, a large number significantly so.

St John Bosco is an inclusive school. The extremely positive ethos is one of happiness, unity and mutual respect. Pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of their faith and are able to relate their own daily lives to the way Jesus lived. The children are fine ambassadors for the school. They are cheerful, courteous and welcoming. Their smart appearance reflects all they do, impressing by their initiative, positive attitudes and developing maturity. Pupils are eager to engage in a variety of responsibilities around the school and they perform their duties with pride. Behaviour is exemplary.

The school staff are a highly motivated, supportive and united team, with a deep commitment to their faith. They are excellent role models and care is taken to encourage children at every opportunity and celebrate their success as a school family. Pupils recognise how much they are valued and speak warmly about the care and attention they receive.

Collective worship is well planned and pupil response is very positive. They are attentive and reverent in prayer and are able to express their feelings thoughtfully and confidently when sharing prayer intentions together and understand the importance it has in their daily lives.

Provision overall is excellent. Clear, developmental lesson planning, the high quality teaching of a rich, exciting and well focused curriculum, ensures consistently good outcomes for the children. Catholic life has a powerful impact on the school community and parents speak highly about the education their children receive. St John Bosco is an outstanding school where staff and governors work together with a shared vision to ensure provision is of the highest quality.

Recommendations

- Develop opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship in other faiths/invite visitors from other faiths into school.
- Develop the school as a faith community through greater interaction and varied participation by children in the sacramental life of the school.

¹ 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.



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April 2012

Dear Parents and Carers

Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of St John Bosco Catholic Primary School March 2012

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 John Bosco School has an outstanding Catholic ethos where children make excellent progress in their Religious Education because of the broad, well planned curriculum and the consistently high quality teaching they receive. The headteacher and his dedicated staff provide excellent encouragement and support for all the children so that they can develop as confident learners in a secure and happy environment. Relationships within the school are excellent, the children behave extremely well and they take great pride in showing their school to be the best. The Catholic mission of the school is central to all it does and the evidence of their attitudes, values and commitment to the school is testimony to the way the children embrace it.

In order to broaden learning in RE I have recommended that the outcomes of the thorough and accurate school evaluation be developed by providing opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship in other faiths and extend children's participation in the Sacramental life of the school.

It was a pleasure to inspect St John Bosco School. I enjoyed my visit very much and was made most welcome by all. Your children are a credit to the school, to their families and those who care for them.

Yours sincerely'

Dominic Collins
Diocesan Inspector