



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection Report

OUR LADY & ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Part of the Holy Spirit Multi Academy Company

Riversley Park, Coton Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV11 5TY

Inspection dates : 3rd – 4th July 2019
Lead Inspector: Mary Daniels

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: **Outstanding**

Catholic Life: Outstanding

Religious Education: Outstanding

Collective Worship: Outstanding

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is an Outstanding Catholic school because:

- The formation of the Multi Academy Company (MAC) has greatly contributed to the Catholic Life of the school. Directors and leaders have developed, 'The Holy Spirit Experience', which firmly places Catholic Life at the heart of all they do in each key area of school life.
- Leaders have introduced a bespoke sacramental preparation programme for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation, which contributes to high levels of attainment in Religious Education.
- Pupils lead prayer and Collective Worship with enthusiasm. Class Collective Worship is established with pupils increasingly taking a leading role.
- There is a strong culture of challenge and support across the school, which is regular and transparent. As a result, staff continually challenge themselves to improve and they all share accountability for the Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship of the school.

FULL REPORT

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend pupils' awareness of other faiths by visiting places of worship.
- Increase the level of challenge for most able pupils to apply their learning in Religious Education as an active expression of faith.
- Ensure a variety of approaches and resources are used consistently so that all pupils are actively engaged in Collective Worship.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.**The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.**

- Immediately when you enter the school its Catholic Life is apparent. The mission statement, religious displays, virtues and spiritual quotations are clearly visible throughout the school and contribute to the vibrant learning environment.
- Almost all pupils appreciate, value and actively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school, 'With grace and humility, glorify the Lord by your Life.' In pupil discussions with the inspectors one pupil explained, "At a Catholic school God is at the centre of everything we do." They are eager to join in the numerous opportunities that are provided to nurture their own faith journey.
- Staff are fully committed to the mission of the school and implement it across all aspects of school life. They actively participate in activities that reflect the school's Catholic Life; attending masses, retreats and courses. Many staff practice their faith at the parish church and are involved in the life of the parish.
- The commitment of staff is particularly evident in the responses from new members of staff. In discussions they commented about the distinct Catholic Life of the school. They are very proud to be part of the school and are enthusiastically involved in all aspects of Catholic Life.
- Pupils evaluate the Catholic Life and mission of the school regularly and pupil voice is a major aspect at the school. Through the work of 'Agents of Ambition' (an elected group of pupils) and pupil conferencing, pupils are involved in auditing the physical environment, prayer spaces and participating in pupil interviews. These activities inform the school developmental plan.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary at all times. Even the youngest pupils demonstrate an ability to listen and give thanks. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and are excellent role models, treating pupils and each other with respect. Pupils are encouraged to respect others and themselves and take responsibility for their own behaviour asking, "What would Jesus do?", in all situations.
- Pupils take a leading role in activities that promote the Catholic Life of the school. They support those less fortunate than themselves and there are numerous opportunities for charitable outreach, locally, nationally and globally. As part of the Holy Spirit Experience, pupils in key stage 2 have the opportunity to join a fundraising committee and make a delivery to a foodbank.
- Pupils enthusiastically participate in activities provided for them. There are a wide range of extracurricular activities offered by the school and there are numerous opportunities for pupils to take on roles of responsibility.
- Chaplaincy provision is very strong. The parish priest is actively engaged in the school and is the link governor for Catholic Life and Religious Education and vice-chair of the Academy board. He is very involved in the sacramental preparation of

pupils. He visits the school regularly and has excellent relationships with pupils and staff.

- Almost all pupils take advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. There is a commitment to nurture and care for each other as a family. Support is provided through the Serenity Team, Rainbow programme and a protective behaviour programme, Taking Care. There is also a pastoral team that provides early help for pupils and families. As a result, pupils' needs, including those of the most vulnerable, are met in this supportive, caring environment.
- The school is very alert to the pastoral needs of staff and systems are in place to provide care and support for them. This is very obvious in the support the school provides for newly qualified teachers and students, who are highly appreciative of the care and commitment shown to them.
- Pupils have a good understanding of loving relationships. The school has used the 'All That I Am', relationship and sex education programme (SRE) and are now adopting a new scheme recommended by the diocese. Parental engagement has been very positive and pupils have responded well to the scheme.
- An understanding of vocation is developed through a variety of activities. Pupils attend retreats and there are opportunities to pray and reflect on how to serve others. Opportunities to develop self-confidence are provided through work focused on the virtues promoted in the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile (CSPP) and having roles of responsibility. Visits by members of the parish to talk about their vocation provide additional support for vocation work at the school. Reception classes were visited by three parishioners who shared their vocation as a religious sister, a nurse helping the sick at Lourdes and a musician who regularly plays the organ at Mass.
- Almost all pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish. They are regularly involved in parish celebrations attending monthly Masses, as well as participating in Benediction and Adoration held at the school.
- Pupils' awareness of other faiths is developed through a focus week when each class studies a different faith. This work is then shared with the school community.
- There is a strong sense of community across the whole school. Relationships are very positive between pupils, staff and parents. Parental support is excellent. There is high attendance at school events and parents' views of the school are very positive. "The school has a real family feel", "My child has flourished here" and "I have been welcomed with open arms as a non-Catholic", are examples of the numerous positive comments from parents.
- This sense of community is further enhanced through the school's links with the parish, which are very strong. The school and parish are viewed as one community. Parishioners are welcomed into the school to support the curriculum and join in celebrations. Meditation is regularly led by the parish sister. Sunday Masses are well attended by families and a large number of pupils attend the liturgy group.
- Sacramental preparation further develops the links between parish and school as pupils attend parish Masses and celebrations. A catechist from the parish also supports sacramental preparation in school.
- The curriculum is enriched by opportunities to consider, debate and reflect on moral and social issues. Pupils are encouraged to consider issues such as poverty, homelessness and the environment.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school.

- Leaders and managers have maintained the outstanding Catholic Life of the school despite the numerous changes since the previous inspections. Our Lady and

St Joseph's Catholic Academy was formed by the amalgamation of St Joseph's Catholic School and Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Infant School. Both schools had previously converted to academy status, forming part of the Holy Spirit Catholic Multi Academy Company (MAC). There have been significant changes in staffing also with the Principal of Our Lady & St Joseph's taking up the role of Senior Executive Principal across the MAC. A new Principal was appointed to Our Lady and St Joseph's Catholic Academy.

- The formation of the MAC has greatly contributed to the leadership and the Catholic Life of the school. Directors and leaders have developed, 'The Holy Spirit Experience', which focuses on key areas of school life and clearly places Catholic Life at the heart of all they do.
- This concept is distinctly seen in Our Lady and St Joseph's Catholic Academy where 'The Holy Spirit Experience' is pivotal in developing Catholic Life and focusing very clearly on prayer, sacramental preparation, Collective Worship, support for charities and social action.
- There is a strong culture of challenge and support across the school, which is regular and transparent. As a result, staff continually challenge themselves to improve and they all share accountability for the Catholic Life of the school.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest possible priority by leaders, who ensure there are rigorous monitoring processes in place. A Catholic Life and Religious Education MAC network meets termly to share good practice and to provide challenge for each school through monitoring and evaluation activities.
- As part of an Educational Standards Committee (ESC), governors and directors regularly work with senior leaders to monitor and evaluate Catholic Life. ESC visits are purposeful and have a clear focus. Governors have the opportunity to meet pupils, observe teaching and learning and look at books. Their observations are reported to the board's standards committee and these inform future actions.
- Professional development is excellent and leaders are committed to developing the expertise of staff. The school is a lead school in the MAC and provides training across the MAC family of schools, with senior leaders sharing good practice. Professional development involves a variety of training opportunities, which include external courses led by the diocese, MAC courses and internal training from senior leaders and the parish priest.
- All staff have a performance management objective linked to Catholic Life as identified in the school development plan. Individual feedback to staff ensures they know how they can contribute to the overall priority.
- The school is very successful in engaging with parents and carers. Family involvement is encouraged through regular school Masses, stay and pray sessions, charitable outreach opportunities, sacramental preparation and celebration assemblies.
- Leaders, directors and governors are highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and lead by example. They are passionate in their vision for every pupil in the school. They want to develop pupils who have a, "lived faith", are concerned with social issues and have a, "clear sense of calling".
- Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are very committed and visit school regularly attending masses and visiting classes.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of Religious Education.	Outstanding
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	Outstanding
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.	Outstanding

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

- Pupils enter the school below the expected standards and make rapid progress in Religious Education. Attainment at the end of Reception and key stage is very high. The majority of pupils reach expected levels with a significant number exceeding expected standards. Pupils do as well in Religious Education as they do in other core subjects like English.
- Almost all groups make good progress. Pupils with English as a second language (EAL) make excellent progress especially in key stage 2 when acquisition of language has been achieved. Pupil Premium pupils also make excellent progress. The school has identified that the progress of pupils with special educational needs (SEND) is an area to improve and numerous strategies have been put in place to rectify this.
- The Religious Education curriculum is rich with good cross curricular links. Pupils can apply the skills, knowledge and understanding from their Religious Education lessons to the world around them. When considering moral and social issues pupils use their work in Religious Education to inform their decisions, for example, showing forgiveness in the playground and working with those less fortunate than themselves.
- Pupils are engaged in lessons and concentrate well. Behaviour is always excellent. They enjoy learning because teachers plan interesting lessons and employ a wide range of active learning strategies. These include collaborative group work, use of video clips and imaginative and creative written activities.
- During the inspection, Year 6 pupils debated which virtue promoted in the CSPP was the most important. The pupils worked in groups to present their arguments to a panel of pupils. They made excellent use of prior knowledge to support their arguments. The teacher challenged the pupils further with questioning, "Why might people struggle to live out this virtue?" and "How does this virtue bring you closer to God?". Pupils were totally engaged and enjoyed working collaboratively together. They were articulate and confident in explaining their reasons and linked the virtues to their own lives.
- Pupils are very positive and enthusiastic about their Religious Education lessons. They told the inspectors that their lessons are always challenging and encourage them to use their emotions and their feelings. They learn about Jesus and how to follow his example in their own lives. Some of their thoughtful responses include; "Faith is personal to you and cannot be taken away from you", "Jesus was humble and caring. Religious Education teaches us to be like him", "Jesus forgave everyone, never singled anyone out – that's how we treat our friends", "Religious Education makes you a strong believer in God and you become closer to him."

- Pupils work is excellent and demonstrates a wide range of activities including drama, art, music, written tasks and prayer. Marking and feedback follows the school's marking policy. Teachers challenge and support pupils using a three-star system. Three different tasks are planned and pupils chose which task they complete. Challenge is provided by 'shoot to success' tasks, which extends pupils' thinking.
- Lessons are well planned using the 'Learning and Growing as People of God' curriculum strategy. As a result, all teaching of Religious Education is good, and most is outstanding.
- Teachers provide an excellent level of challenge for all pupils in Religious Education. For example, during the inspection, a Year 2 teacher used the feast day of St Thomas to teach about the concept of doubt. As the pupils explored this concept, their learning was extended through challenging questions from the teacher; "What did Thomas need to believe?", "What does faith mean?" and "Why is it important?" The pupils displayed a level of maturity greater than their years as they were encouraged to work together. Progress was clearly evident throughout the lesson.
- Good quality resources are available in all classes. Additional adults are used expertly. They provide effective support to teachers and pupils.
- Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and are willing to share their faith with pupils.
- Most pupils are involved in evaluating how well they are learning. Teachers begin units of work by finding out what pupils already know. This helps them to closely match activities to the experiences and knowledge of the pupils.
- Classroom environments are bright with interesting displays which show the liturgical season. A prayer area is the focal point of the room and every class has a display of the virtues promoted in the CSPP.
- Achievement and effort in Religious Education is often celebrated in class, at celebration assemblies and through the school website.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

- Leaders and governors ensure the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' conference and is taught for the correct amount of time.
- Leaders ensure that Religious Education has full parity with other core curriculum subjects. There is a well-established MAC Catholic Life and Religious Education network who meet regularly to share good practice and to provide challenge for each other.
- There is a constant cycle of improvement, which involves weekly learning walks, lesson observations, book trawls and pupil interviews. Monitoring accurately identifies both strengths and areas for development. Religious Education books are moderated regularly both in school and across the MAC.
- Analysis of teacher assessments and data is rigorous. Attainment and progress in Religious Education is discussed at half term pupil progress meetings, which leads to a shared understanding and responsibility by all staff. As a result, any weaknesses are promptly addressed in order to continue to raise standards.
- The subject leader has an inspiring vision for the teaching and learning of Religious Education and a high level of expertise. She leads by example and has provided effective training and support for teachers.
- New teachers and students follow a programme of introduction and are supported by more experienced members of staff.

- Leaders have introduced a bespoke sacramental preparation programme for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation, which contributes to high levels of attainment in Religious Education. The programmes were written by senior leaders and the parish priest. They provide a high level of challenge for pupils and have been adopted across the MAC.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education meets the needs of different groups of pupils. Resources are made available to support all pupils.
- Standards in Religious Education are reported to governors and directors regularly. The ESC committee are regularly involved in monitoring activities and committee members have received training on their role from the MAC.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality of Collective Worship.	Outstanding
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	Outstanding
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.	Outstanding

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship. The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff. Pupils say that, "Prayer is never limited throughout the day."
- All pupils act with reverence and are keen to be involved in acts of Collective Worship. They sing joyfully and join in responses with confidence. There are opportunities for prayerful silence during all acts of Collective Worship, which the pupils use reverently.
- Pupils lead prayer and Collective Worship with enthusiasm. Class Collective Worship is well established and pupils are increasingly taking a leading role. During class worship, pupils share their own prayers and a prayerful atmosphere is developed through the use of music and candles.
- During the inspection, a Year 4 class planned and led worship using the gather, listen, respond and go forth model. It was well-planned by the pupils, who led the session confidently. Pupils responded reverently participating in a guided meditation and answering questions. They ended the session by quoting Pope Francis, "Doubt is the key to a life of faith," and reminding pupils that, "Jesus is always with us – even if sometimes we don't realise it."
- In Year 1, the inspector saw pupils beginning to lead the Collective Worship. They helped choose the artefacts to place on the prayer table and wrote their own prayers. Two pupils led the readings and pupils listened reverently. Bubbles were used creatively to represent Jesus listening to their prayers.
- Pupils use a variety of approaches to prayer; formal and informal, private and communal and they are encouraged to be still and listen to God. Prayer is enhanced by the use of drama, sacred music, art and guided meditation. A prayer of the month is displayed around the school.
- The school has embraced the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile (CSPP) and the virtues it promotes are an integral part of Collective Worship.

- The school has a beautiful prayer room and prayer garden, which are used regularly by pupils. Devout prayer leaders in Year 6 lead prayer sessions in the prayer room. They plan the sessions independently with a clear understanding of the messages they want to share.
- Chaplaincy provision in the school is strong. The parish priest is very supportive and a parish sister leads sacramental preparation and meditation.
- There are a number of retreats organised throughout the year for pupils and staff. These include a whole school retreat, MAC retreat and retreats for pupils receiving the sacraments.
- Pupils have the opportunity to share Collective Worship and prayer with other school communities through the MAC and they attend the Good Shepherd Mass. They were also involved in the Marian Prayer chain when a statue of Mary moved from each MAC school throughout a day in May. Each school joined together to recite the rosary.
- Planned daily Collective Worship is given a high priority in terms of planning, evaluating and resourcing. There are regular Masses held in the parish church, a hymn practice for the upper and lower school and a mission assembly every week.
- Relevant staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year and ensure pupils are familiar with it and have excellent experiences of the Church's seasons and feasts.
- Collective Worship has a positive impact on parents and families who are invited to all school Masses, celebration assemblies and liturgies throughout the year. Parents respond very positively to these opportunities to join in the school's Collective Worship.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

- Leaders know how to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. They are excellent models of good practice for staff and pupils.
- Leaders are supported by the MAC, which has very clear guidance for pupils' prayer and worship at each key stage. These include being actively involved in a daily act of worship, attending parish family Masses, being allocated a prayer partner, planning and leading Collective Worship and the opportunity to attend voluntary acts of worship.
- There is also detailed guidance on Collective Worship and prayer for staff. High quality resources and support have been developed by leaders, such as Lenten and Adoration prayer books, Novena prayers and prayer bags.
- Training is provided for new staff through the diocese and support from senior and more experienced members of staff.
- Collective Worship is well organised and planned by the principal and subject lead. There is a wide variety of Collective Worship planned throughout the year.
- Collective worship has a clear message and purpose. Themes for Masses and assemblies reflect the liturgical calendar and ensure pupils have a good understanding of the liturgical year, seasons and feasts.
- Formal monitoring of Collective Worship is carried out by senior leaders, members of the ESC and Worship teams. Monitoring of Collective Worship is robust and follows a cycle of audits, planning trawls, learning walks, parent and pupil questionnaires and informal feedback from visitors.
- Feedback from all monitoring is given promptly and any areas for development are addressed in order to improve the quality of Collective Worship.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	141823
Local authority	Warwickshire
This inspection was carried out under canon 806 of Canon Law and under Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act.	
Type of school	Primary
School category	Multi Academy Company
Age range	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	524
Appropriate authority	Board of Directors
Chair of board of directors	Jim Foley
Chair of local academy committee	Jim Crawford
Principal	Sara Chapman
Telephone number	02476383807
Website address	olsjacademy.co.uk
Email address	admin3584@welearn365.com
Date of previous inspection	11 th -12 th March 2014

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- Our Lady & St Joseph's Catholic Academy is a two-form entry Catholic primary school. It serves the parish of Our Lady and St Joseph.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 88%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins is in line with the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is in line with the national average.
- Attainment on entry is in line with national expectations.
- Since the last inspection there have been a number of significant changes. Our Lady and St Joseph's Academy opened in February 2017. This was formed by the amalgamation of St Joseph's Catholic School and Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Infant School. In March 2015 both schools had converted to academy status, forming part of the Holy Spirit Catholic MAC. There have been significant changes in staffing with the principal of Our Lady & St Joseph's taking up the role of senior executive principal across the MAC. A new principal was appointed to the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors – Mary Daniels and Bernadette Corbett.
- The focus of the inspection was on the impact, quality and leadership of the school's provision of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- The inspectors observed teaching across fourteen Religious Education lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic Life, the impact of Religious Education teaching on their learning over time and their experience of Collective Worship.
- Meetings were held with the directors and governors, which included the chair of the MAC, the chair of governors, executive lead, principal and the Religious Education subject leader.
- The inspectors attended a whole school Mass and undertook a learning walk to look at Collective Worship across the school, aspects of learning and teaching in Religious Education, the presentation of the Catholic Life of the school and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, Analysis of School Performance (ASP) data, the school development plan, the Religious Education action plan and teachers' planning.