



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT:

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St Edward's Catholic Primary School
Address: Wivern Place
Runcorn
Cheshire
WA7 1RZ

Tel No: 01928 572317

URN: 111319

Headteacher: Mrs K O'Hare

Chair of Governors: Mr D Caulfield

Date of Inspection: 7 November 2019

Inspectors: Mrs E Robb
Mr K Toms



St Edward's Mission Statement

To love, to serve and learn.

We are a school family journeying together in God's love.

We serve each other to achieve our best.

We learn in fun and creative ways,
respecting everyone's gifts.

SCHOOL: St Edwards Catholic Primary School,

DATE OF LAST INSPECTION: December 2014

JUDGEMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION: Outstanding

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION

No areas for development were identified in the Monitoring Report for Outstanding schools in December 2014.

PROGRESS MADE WITH AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION

Although no actions were identified from the Monitoring Report in 2014, the Headteacher identified key areas for development which informed the Religious Education Action Plan. Consequently the school continues to make excellent progress.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

1

St Edward's Catholic Primary School provides an outstanding Catholic education for pupils as evidenced in the areas below.

This is an outstanding Catholic school.

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

Summary of key findings:

St Edward's is an outstanding, happy, welcoming school where the Gospel values underpin all the school sets out to achieve:

- The inspirational Headteacher is deeply committed to the Catholic life of the school and is determined to provide the best possible Catholic Education for all pupils.
- She is strongly supported by all Staff and Governors, who continually work very hard to maintain the very high standards in this school.
- The Governors are well informed about all aspects of school life.
- The Staff at St Edward's have many responsibilities and roles and perform these with commitment and dedication.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and are kept well informed about the Catholic life of the school.
- The pupils are delightful and their behaviour is outstanding. They are very caring towards each other.
- Pupils show high levels of religious literacy and make excellent progress throughout their school journey. They enjoy their Religious Education lessons.
- Collective Worship at all levels is outstanding. The children pray with reverence and respect and enjoy preparing and delivering Acts of Collective Worship.
- Throughout the school there is a strong sense of belonging to a faith family.

What the school needs to do to improve further

Areas for development have already been identified by the Headteacher after each section in the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form for Denominational Inspection and the Inspectors agree that the following two areas would be helpful to develop further:

- Continue to develop links with the Parish Community beyond the Sacramental Programme.
- Continue to develop the Social Teaching of the Church through curriculum development. This will also help pupils to understand local and global needs.

Information about the Inspection

The Inspection of St Edward's Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Shrewsbury Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Denominational Inspections approved by the Bishop of Shrewsbury. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- 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
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors over one day.

- Three Acts of Collective Worship were observed
- The Inspectors observed teaching and learning in the 5 classes
- Discussions were held with Headteacher/ Religious Education Leader, Religious Education Governor and representative groups of pupils

- General conversations were conducted with Staff and pupils throughout the day
- A representative sample of pupils' Religious Education books and Collective Worship books were scrutinised as well as the comprehensive Religious Education file
- The school's website was reviewed
- A wide range of documents were made available including the Diocesan School Evaluation Form, timetables, attainment and progress data, parent, staff and pupil questionnaires and Governors' information
- Displays around the school and classroom displays

Information about this school

- St Edward's is a single form entry Catholic Primary school in Runcorn
- The pupil admission number is 20, there are currently 132 pupils on roll, just over 50% are Catholics
- The Headteacher has been in post for 8 years and is also the Religious Education Lead
- Staff include 6 full time equivalent teachers (50% are Catholic) and 6 Support Assistants
- Three members of Staff have CCRS or equivalent
- All teachers teach Religious Education

Full report – inspection judgments

CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding

1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	1

- The Mission Statement is reviewed regularly by Governors and Staff.
- The children have an excellent understanding of the Mission Statement, “*To love, to serve and learn*” and are able to articulate its meaning in their own words.
- Pupils make the School Mission Statement pertinent to themselves, having developed their own class Mission Statements which focus on the Catholic life in each classroom.
- The high standards, the excellent relationships and the respect and care pupils have for each other are testament to the impact the Mission Statement has on the school and beyond - this is further evidenced by the responses from the pupil, staff and parent questionnaires:
 - “*I feel lucky to work in such a lovely school with our Catholic faith at the centre of all we do*” (Staff questionnaire).
- The pupils are willing and confident to participate in and volunteer for liturgies in school and in Church. During discussions with pupil representatives, the pupils stated that they enjoy Masses with the Parish Priest.
- There are excellent relationships in school between pupils, staff, parents and governors.
- The pupils’ behaviour is outstanding; they are polite, caring and considerate to each other.
- The pupils’ spiritual and moral development stems from their learning in Religious Education, and Relationships and Sex Education is based upon Catholic teaching and principles.
- Pupil Voice is heard through, for example, the School Council, Mini-Vinnies and the GIFT team (formerly the Prayer Leaders). These groups enable the pupils to share their ideas with the school community and beyond, with a strong emphasis on serving others as well as developing their own faith journey. The pupils understand that everyone is special, unique and made in the image of God and:
 - “*We try to be like Jesus and Jesus is God*”.
- There is a strong sense of family in this outstanding school - it is apparent that all adults are committed to providing the best possible Catholic Education for all pupils in an environment of trust and Gospel values.
- The pupils show an excellent awareness of the needs of others. The School Council focuses on ways in which they can make life better for others less fortunate than themselves through organising fund raising activities, for example, CAFOD, Good Shepherd and Mission Together. They volunteer to sing at local community events and are always willing to find ways in which they can love, serve and learn.

- The children learn to respect their own faith as well as the faith of others.
- The pupils are aware of the Diocesan community and contributed to the Diocesan competition for the Year of Holiness, thus developing an understanding of the Church in the wider community.
- There are exciting and stimulating displays around the school and in the classrooms which emphasise and celebrate the Catholic character of the school. Visitors know that they are in a Catholic school from the various images and artefacts they see as they enter the school building. The signs and symbols etched in the glass windows are particularly effective.
- Pupils take great pride in their Religious Education Books, which are exemplary.
- Pupils are actively encouraged to participate in the Sacramental Programme which is organised in the parish by Catechists and the Parish Priest. The school supports the parents by sending home booklets about the First Sacraments.
- Pastoral care is of the highest quality for pupils and for staff. Robust systems are in place to support vulnerable families and pupils.
- Catholic Social teaching is linked to the whole school curriculum and the daily practice of school life, resulting in excellent pastoral care provision for pupils and staff.
- Leaders and Governors are fully committed to the Church's mission in education and are dedicated and determined for St Edward's to be the best it can be. They ensure that all Staff are aware of this and carefully monitor this throughout the year. They are involved in its evaluations and are ready to challenge when necessary. They reflect on the Catholic life of the school through discussions and meetings between staff and pupils.
- Governors are actively involved in and very supportive of, the school and parish community and attend school events for example, School Masses, Collective Worship and Parents' evenings.
- There is great emphasis on Continued Professional Development, covering a range of activities from Catholic Spirituality (Lectio Divina) provided by the Parish Priest, as well as internally, on, for example, Catholic Social teaching provided by Headteacher. Staff have attended Diocesan organised courses, for Foundations in Faith, Newly Qualified Teacher programme and Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is outstanding.

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

- Pupils make excellent progress in each Key Stage with high attainment overall from their varied starting points.
- Pupils have an excellent knowledge and understanding of Religious Education and are actively encouraged to apply this to their everyday lives. In lessons observed the pupils were able to recall prior learning to support or develop points being made during the lesson.
- Staff ensure that provision matches the needs of all pupils, with differentiation used to good effect. They use a range of strategies, for example, skilful questioning, to extend further their pupils understanding and knowledge. Teaching Assistants provide support for pupils where tasks are adapted to meet the individual needs of the pupils.
- The pupils really enjoy their Religious Education lessons, especially the creative and innovative ways in which lessons are delivered.
- One pupil commented ,
“I like the way we do drama and plays to dig deeper into our Religious Education”.
- Opportunities are available for pupils to develop an awareness of Social Justice through Caritas lessons as well as an annual Refugee topic. To ensure that the Religious Education programme, the Way, the Truth and the Life, provides the best possible opportunities for all pupils, the Religious Education Lead is developing a 2 year plan for mixed aged classes, which will reflect more precisely Catholic Social Teaching and provide an overview of where topics and concepts interweave.
- Behaviour in all lessons observed was outstanding. The pupils were keen and eager to learn about all aspects of Religious Education and are developing a religious literacy which enables them to speak confidently about their Religious Education lessons. They are extremely well motivated to do their best through challenge, praise and affirmation.
- From Early Years to Year 6 Staff have high expectations of their pupils. Staff are confident in their subject knowledge and use a range of strategies to extend further their pupils understanding and knowledge.
- Lessons are well planned and a wide range of teaching styles deliver engaging and interactive learning opportunities for all pupils, and as a result most teaching is outstanding and never less than good, as observed by the Inspectors.
- In the lessons observed, regular feedback was given to pupils and time given for their responses or comments. The pupils were encouraged to think deeper and reflect on their responses. “I can” statements and driver words are used to great effect.

- The pupils' Religious Education Workbooks are outstanding. The pupils obviously take great pride in the content and presentation of their work - another example of the high standards expected from all pupils.
- Teachers' knowledge of their children through formative and summative assessment, along with the excellent relationships within the classroom, enable the teachers to cater for individual needs appropriately.
- Leaders and Governors comply fully with the Bishops' Conference Requirements and Religious Education is well resourced, given parity with other core curriculum subjects and at least 10% of the timetable is dedicated to the teaching of Religious Education across all year groups.
- There is a constant focus by Leaders and Governors on how to improve teaching and learning throughout the school to enable all pupils to progress and reach their full potential, through regular reviews, self- evaluation and associated improvement planning.
- Systems for monitoring teaching and learning are well planned, ensuring that an effective and enriching Religious Education curriculum is in place.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. Their children are happy and love attending school with one parent commenting:
"Our children love attending school, they feel welcomed, included, have fantastic teaching and support staff and have regular Collective Worship with access to the parish Church which we are very pleased with. St Edward's has an excellent reputation locally and is a close knit school. We all see school as an extension to our Catholic family which is to their credit "
- There is no room for complacency at St Edward's - the Headteacher, who is also the Religious Education Lead, supported by the Governors, is always aspiring to improve the teaching and learning in Religious Education. Her knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith and Religious Education is outstanding.
- The Headteacher's vision and mission are clear - to provide the best possible experiences for all pupils within the context of a Gospel rich environment.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is outstanding.

1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

- The quality of Collective Worship at all levels is outstanding and is embedded into all aspects of school life. The Act of Collective Worship observed at the beginning of the school day, led by the Headteacher and the GIFT team was outstanding. The children were engaged, they prayed reverently, sang beautifully and clearly understood the message of-
"Every day you have the opportunity to make the right choice - will you?"
- Staff are highly skilled in leading Collective Worship and in helping and supporting the pupils who are very enthusiastic to participate in and lead Acts of Collective Worship.
- There are a variety of Collective Worship experiences, such as, Gospel Assembly, Key Stage worship, Class Assemblies, Mass in school and in Church and 'Stilling Time', to mention a few.
- The pupils enjoy participating in prayerful activities such as Prayer Trails and Stations of the Cross. Year 6 enjoy their Retreat days. These opportunities help the pupils to deepen their faith through prayer and worship.
- Pupils' Collective Worship books are of an extremely high standard and indicative of the significance placed on Collective Worship by the school leadership, staff and the wider school community.
- Families, Governors and Parishioners are invited to participate in a variety of Collective Worship services and Assemblies throughout the year and always enjoy the way in which the children lead these services with confidence and reverence.
- The GIFT team (Prayer Leaders) take responsibility for leading Collective Worship in different classes and during school assembly. The children are taught "school daily prayers" as well as traditional Catholic prayers. They are also encouraged to develop their own prayers. They pray with reverence and are encouraged to share the Gospel message with their families through the Wednesday Word.
- The school and class environments reflect the changes in the Liturgical year and pupils have a developing understanding of each season as well as feast days.
- Displays in the classrooms and throughout the school are excellent, inspiring and contribute to the Catholic identity of St Edward's - this is enhanced further by the excellent quality of relationships throughout this friendly, family, faith orientated school.
- The Character Gospel Assemblies provide pupils with an opportunity to explore the

characteristics of “disciple” and to try and develop the characteristics in and out of school. These purposeful Acts of Worship enrich the pupils’ spiritual and moral development.

- The pupils particularly enjoy celebrating Collective Worship in the classroom. In one Collective Worship observed, the pupils showed reverence and respect, were confident in their beliefs and demonstrated an understanding of prayer, mission, awe and wonder.
- Collective Worship is part of the self-evaluation process and is regularly reviewed by Staff and Governors. Feedback is used constructively to improve the experiences for all pupils, and feedback is welcomed from pupils and families as well.
- Collective Worship is central to all the school sets out to achieve. It is seen as a natural and vital experience for pupils, staff and the wider community. The Governors are proud of the high standard of Collective Worship in the school as it promotes Gospel values and underpins the school’s mission.