



DIOCESE OF  
SHREWSBURY

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## REPORT ON THE S48 MONITORING INSPECTION OF OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS

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

School:	St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School
Address:	Well Lane Alsager Stoke on Trent ST7 2PG
Tel No:	01270 875770
URN:	111339
Headteacher:	Mr E Byrne
Chair of Governors:	Mr K Fox
Date of Inspection:	21 June 2017
Inspector:	Mrs E Robb

St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School continues to provide an outstanding Catholic education, which is central to the life of the school. There is a welcoming, friendly and caring atmosphere throughout the whole school.

Since the last inspection there have been significant changes in the leadership of the school; a new Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher, and, although not new to the school, a new Religious Education Lead Teacher. The Headteacher and his team are keen to continue the excellent work at St Gabriel's and to make changes sensitively and appropriately.

A new Mission Statement was developed during 2015/16 and is manifested in the words: '*Nurturing Hearts and Minds*'.

The belief in, and commitment to, the changed Mission Statement, initiated by the new Headteacher, has contributed to the shared vision of all who work in this successful school, continuing to provide the best possible outcomes for all pupils.

As part of the new Mission Statement initiative, a set of '*Be Values*' was established for pupils, in order that they could understand how they could become followers of Christ, through '*Nurturing Hearts and Minds*'. The pupils are aware of the significance and relevance of the '*Be Values*' and were able to express ways in which they could live by these, for example, how to think of others first (Mini-Vinnies), how to make the school better and be more eco-friendly (School Council and Recycling Officers), the appropriateness and need for prayers (Prayer Monitors) and how to look after the younger children (Play Leaders).

The Learning Walk provided the Inspector with the opportunity to visit all classrooms where there were examples of outstanding practice. The classrooms are stimulating learning environments which provide motivation and security for all pupils to achieve well. The pupils make good progress and are keen to learn. They are encouraged to seize opportunities wherever and whenever they arise for their faith to come alive, sharing their ideas and opinions with confidence and respect. They are keen learners and enjoy the opportunities provided for them. These opportunities encourage and assist pupils to become responsible and to serve their school and the wider community. They are involved in numerous charities for example, Good Shepherd, CAFOD, Children in Need and Macmillan.

The pupils are also encouraged to think about how they live and how others live, locally and/or globally and are part of the Global Learning Programme, which plans include: '*the golden thread of learning*'.

The pupils are well-motivated and enthusiastic learners and are encouraged to be the best that they can be - one of the '*Be Values*'. The exciting stimulating displays, the standard of work in the children's books, the respectful relationships with each other and with staff indicate the commitment to the promotion of the high standards expected of all.

The pupils enjoy and are keen to plan and lead Collective Worship. As they progress throughout the school they become more confident and independent in delivering reverent and meaningful acts of Collective Worship.

In the Act of Collective Worship observed the pupils were attentive and respectful, responding appropriately to quiet reflection and prayer. The pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are polite and happy pupils who feel loved and valued.

Monitoring and assessment strategies are in place and the outcomes of these are regularly discussed at designated staff meetings where staff can share views and discuss concerns. As assessment and monitoring strategies develop they continue to be priorities in the Religious Education Action Plan, acknowledged and supported by the Governors.

The Religious Education Lead Teacher meets termly with the Diocesan network and reports back to staff. Her commitment to Religious Education is commendable - she is very supportive, helpful and promotes the school's mission through her example.

The Governors are very proud of their school and rightly so. They are hardworking and committed to ensuring that Catholicity is strong. As a '*critical friend*', the Chair of Governors has regular contact with the Headteacher and has a visible presence in the school community. The Parish Priest, who is also a Governor, visits school regularly, providing opportunities for pupils to ask questions about their faith and Religious Education lessons. He contributes to a range of opportunities for the pupils' spiritual and moral development. The children look forward to his visits.

The parents are very supportive and share the vision and mission of the school. They see relationships as a strength of the school, the Catholic ethos is evident in all aspects of school life and their children are happy, confident and enjoy coming to school.

In summary it is evident that the Gospel values permeate throughout St Gabriel's school and that this will continue to lead and inspire all involved in the Church's mission in education. The Headteacher and his team are fully committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve the best that they can, in an environment where they are nurtured, challenged and inspired.

**Areas of outstanding practice:**

- Opportunities for all pupils to engage in a variety of Collective Acts of Worship which encourage and develop confidence and independence as they progress through school.
- Deep commitment of all Leaders, Governors and Managers to the Church's mission in education and determination to ensure that pupils have access to the best possible opportunities.
- Access to a variety of opportunities which are designed to inspire and encourage the pupils to be the best that they can be.