



Archdiocese of Birmingham

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Part of the Holy Spirit Multi-Academy Company

Riversley Drive, Coton Rd, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV11 5TY

Inspection dates 25th-26th March 2015
Reporting Inspector Brenda Beale

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Academy
Age range of pupils	7 -11 years
Number on roll	272
Appropriate authority	Board of Directors
Chair of Academic Committee	Fr Michael Gamble
Telephone number	02476 383807
E-mail address	admin3584@welearn365.com
Date of previous inspection	March 2010
DFE School Number	937/3584
Unique Reference Number	125726

Headteacher Mrs Sinead Smith

Previous inspection: 2

This inspection: 1

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



Evidence

- The inspection was carried out by 1 Diocesan Inspector accompanied by an inspector in training
- 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 full RE lessons with the headteacher.
- The inspector completed a work scrutiny and held a discussion with pupils to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time.
- Meetings were held with a governor, staff, and parish priest.
- The inspector observed a 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.
- Other documents such as RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals were read alongside the self-evaluation.

Information about the school

- St Joseph's is a larger than average Catholic junior school serving the large parish of Our Lady of the Angels in Nuneaton.
- The school is in the town centre and caters for a large diverse catchment area including many areas with high levels of economic disadvantage.
- The number of Catholic pupils is currently 88%.
- The proportion of ethnic minority pupils is 23%.
- The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is average as are the numbers with special needs and/or disabilities.
- Attainment on entry is above the national average in RE overall because many of the pupils come from the feeder Catholic infant school.

Main Findings

- St Joseph's reliably judges its worship, Catholic life and RE to be outstanding. This judgement is based on the school's excellent self-evaluation processes that are rigorous and meticulously verified. Thus the maintenance of excellence and the capacity to improve are outstanding.
- Highly committed and exceptionally competent leadership, a united staff and a corporate approach ensure positive outcomes for pupils' spiritual and moral development and outstanding levels of progress and attainment in RE.
- Improvement planning is based on thorough monitoring, detailed feedback and accurate evaluation; it is characterised by clear priorities and success criteria, regular review and appropriate support to ensure plans are realised.
- Parish and school work very closely together, involving parents and carers, ensuring good community cohesion and outstanding spiritual, moral and vocational development for all members of the school community.

School self evaluation

Catholic Life and Collective Worship

- The monitoring and evaluation of Catholic life and worship are excellent.
- Leaders and academy representatives show an unwavering commitment to developing the Catholic life of the school and indeed partnerships within the extended Catholic community. This is affirmed by their decision to become part of the Multi Academy Company of the Holy Spirit, incorporating Catholic schools in the school's Catholic cluster group.
- A range of robust monitoring and evaluation activities (questionnaires, pupil interviews, parent forums, audits, environment learning walks) take place on a regular basis. These involve all stakeholders and the senior leadership team, which includes the RE co-ordinator, members of the academy committee, the parish priest, school staff, parents, pupils and members of the parish: all have an input into the evaluation of the Catholic life of the school.
- The school's most recent questionnaire showed that 100% of parents are 'happy with my child's Catholic education.'
- The outcomes of monitoring and evaluation inform the school improvement plan, which is produced termly and actions to improve Catholic life form the first priority each time. As the plans are termly, rather than yearly, actions are implemented quickly, and consequently improvements are rapid.
- The school provides a range of opportunities for staff to understand the Church's mission and the role of the school and indeed their own role within it. Staff induction involves discussions with the parish priest and support and mentoring from the RE and Catholic life co-ordinator.
- All staff receive professional development provided by the parish priest on the nature of Catholic school, the Church's mission and their responsibility as practitioners within a Catholic school.
- Performance management objectives for both teaching and non-teaching staff relate to the promotion of the Catholic life of the school.
- Collective worship is carefully monitored by senior staff on a regular basis; representatives and the parish priest are also very active in ensuring the quality and appropriateness of whole-school, phase or class worship is excellent.
- Senior leaders rigorously monitor both the quality of prayer and how it develops for pupils through the school. They have put measures in place to ensure that pupils grow in their knowledge of prayer and liturgy and how it can impact on their lives.
- Prayer guidance for staff is clear and detailed offering particular support to newly qualified teachers and non-Catholic staff.
- Children have opportunities to plan, deliver and evaluate liturgy. This is evidenced through the children's liturgy plans which are fed into the overall monitoring process.
- The parish priest provides a valuable contribution to the monitoring of Catholic life and worship in the school. He is a reliable critical and support friend.
- Following careful monitoring and evaluation and subsequent planning and implementation the pupils' ability to pray spontaneously has improved significantly and pupils are now readily writing their own prayers to add to devotional areas in the classroom and in displays around the school.

Governance

- The academy representatives are fully committed to ensuring that the Catholic life, worship and RE provide the very best opportunities for all pupils and members of the community.
- Because they are very well-informed and familiar with the life of the school they are in the position to make exact judgements about the quality of its whole ethos.
- The ethos and personnel committee meet half termly and the progress of the current improvement plan is discussed, challenged and actions reviewed. This is fed back to the whole academy committee as an agenda item and further challenge may take place.
- The ethos committee has carried out a whole day audit of Catholic life in the school which informed action planning.
- The governors of the school prior to becoming an academy were very successful in the recruitment and retention of good Catholic leaders. Targets related to the Catholic life of the school are included in all leaders' performance management.
- Academy representatives help to monitor the planning cycle effectively, and have an input in ensuring its relevance, delivery and impact. Clear priorities, timescales, and success criteria are strong features of the improvement planning.

Religious Education

- Senior leaders monitor and evaluate religious education thoroughly leading to their highly reliable judgement that progress and learning are outstanding and attainment is high and often very high.
- Self-evaluation is rooted in very good analysis of pupil performance in RE and the relationship between data and planning are well developed.
- Rigorous monitoring of RE takes place weekly as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. It is carried out by members of the leadership team, which includes the RE leader and includes learning walks, book trawls, planning scrutiny, pupil interviews and environment trawls.
- Activities, such as moderation of work, tracking and analysis of assessment data, parent questionnaires and full lesson observations, are carried out either termly or annually.
- The subject leader and headteacher have created a culture where staff are regularly seeking to identify progress of individuals and different groups within their classes and initiate action to close the gaps in learning that they find.
- Excellent systems are in place in place to check the quality and impact of teaching and support is given to develop the skills of newly appointed teachers or those who do not have a background in in the Catholic faith.
- Leaders do not shy away from giving hard messages when needed but readily give affirmation to those who are performing well. Teachers welcome constructive criticism and readily reflect on their own practice. The judgement that teaching is generally outstanding and never less than good is supported by a range of monitoring systems comprising learning walks, book trawls, planning scrutinies, and pupil interviews.
- The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is structured around the revised Curriculum Directory and focuses on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the teachings of the Catholic Church and the relationship between life and faith.

- In response to monitoring and evaluation the school, in partnership with the parish priest, has developed a bespoke Sacramental preparation programme for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. A full evaluation is planned when the programme is complete and best practice it will implemented across the school to close gaps in learning.
- For the school the most important criterion of monitoring and evaluation is the impact all activities have on the spiritual, moral and vocational development.

Overall effectiveness of the school¹

- Outstanding progress and attitudes to learning are enhanced by a rich curriculum, excellent Catholic life and vibrant liturgical celebrations.
- The school's internal data shows that 96% of pupils are working at or above age related national and diocesan expectations. No gender issues are apparent and boys and girls perform equally well. The school monitors key groups, addressing issues to ensure all children achieve well.
- All teaching is at least good and often outstanding. Teachers' subject knowledge is exceptionally good supported by regular in service training and the guidance and advice of the outstanding subject leader and the parish priest. Resources are plentiful and frequently replenished.
- Both formative and summative assessments and unit evaluations are carried out by teachers and this is used to inform future planning and teaching on a short term and long term basis. Robust tracking systems are in place. Marking is of a consistently high standard.
- Throughout the school, at least 10% of curriculum time is dedicated to the teaching of RE in the classroom. The RE curriculum used is 'Learning and Growing as People of God' which follows the Archdiocesan guidelines for the provision of religious education and therefore fulfils the requirements of the *Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*.
- The curriculum is rich with a strong emphasis on living out the faith and enhanced by the outstanding worship and liturgical life of the school. Through a variety of opportunities in RE and the wider curriculum, the children are developing a sense of vocation.
- Family life and sex education is delivered in line with the teachings of the Catholic Church using the Archdiocesan scheme.
- Worship and Catholic life are both outstanding and seen as the responsibility of all members of the community who are involved in planning, preparing, leading and evaluating liturgy
- Collective worship is of a high quality and children are confident leading and participating in prayer and liturgy with reverence and respect.
- Sacramental programmes are being developed and are in the process of being delivered. Current evaluation indicates a high level of effectiveness and very good outcomes for pupils and their families.
- Leader, academy representatives and all members of staff are uncompromising and determined in their promotion of the Catholic faith as the very heart of the school and use rigorous, effective and strategic monitoring and evaluation to ensure the Catholic ethos is paramount.

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.

- The quality of relationships within the school is exemplary and children demonstrate kindness and empathy towards each other. The children know, understand and follow the school rules and are aware that their behaviour has consequences for others. They are fully understand the importance forgiveness plays in living as a follower of Jesus.
- Pupils play an active role in contributing to and shaping the life of the school. They are proud of their Catholic faith and of their school. The school mission statement and motto is known and understood by all in the community and informs every part of school life.

Recommendations

- Provide opportunities for 'fresh eyes' monitoring using RE and Catholic life leaders from the newly formed Multi Academy Company and increase opportunities to share and make use of best practice across the MAC
- After evaluation of pilot sacramental preparation programme for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion, implement best practice into other year groups beginning with Confirmation programme in Year 6.



9th April 2015

Diocesan Education Service,
Don Bosco House,
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B46 3EA

Dear Parents and Carers

Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Junior School, 25th-26th March 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 Joseph's is an outstanding Catholic school. The leadership of the headteacher and her senior team is exceptional. They are continuously monitoring and evaluating all aspects of Catholic life and RE and effectively planning and implementing improvement. They are uncompromising in ensuring they provide the very best opportunities for your children's spiritual, moral and vocational development. The academy representatives are fully understanding and supportive of the requirements and priorities of leading a Catholic school. They have high expectations. Catholic life and collective worship in the school are very strong. The pupils are proud of their school and feel safe and happy. They enjoy their learning and make at least good and more often outstanding progress. Achievement in RE is high. RE is very effectively led by a highly competent subject leader who is also the deputy head. Pupils experience a rich and interesting curriculum, outstanding teaching and an excellent worship and liturgical life which all go to provide quality learning and high achievement. They have a very good understanding of prayer and the impact it has on their lives and those around them. They fully understand what is required to live out the Christian life. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding and the respect and care that the children show each other and all within the community is unmistakable.

We have recommended that the school develops a bespoke Confirmation programme building on the model and success of that provided for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. We also recommend that they share their excellent practice across the newly formed multi-academy company and use any expertise within the group.

I would like to thank your children for the welcome and courtesy they showed us during our time in the school. Also it was a great pleasure to meet many parents, carers, grandparents and members of the parish who are so clearly and rightly proud of the school.

Yours sincerely

Brenda Beale
Diocesan Inspector