



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## INSPECTION REPORT

### ST JOHN VIANNEY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL COVENTRY

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Inspection dates 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011  
Reporting Inspector Sister Susan Collins

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Catholic Primary
Age range of pupils	4-11 years
Number on roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Mr John Teahan
School address	Mount Nod Way Coventry CV5 7GX
Telephone number	02476 464088
E-mail address	admin@st-johnvianney.coventry.sch.uk
Parish	St John Vianney
Date of previous inspection	July 2009
DCSF School Number	331/3412
Unique Reference Number	103715

**Headteacher Mrs Veronica Gosling**

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one Diocesan Inspector. The inspector visited three full religious education lessons to observe teaching and learning and pupils' behaviour, and held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. She observed the school's work, including Mass and a prayer service and looked at a range of evidence, including key documentation such as the school's development plan, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in RE, and pupils' work.

## Information about the school

This is a one-form entry Catholic primary school serving the parish of St John Vianney in the suburb of Mount Nod. There are currently 199 pupils on roll with 86% being baptised Catholics. The vast majority are of white British heritage; there is a small ethnic minority within the school mainly of African, Polish, Filipino and Chinese origin. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is low (6%) and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. On site there is a wraparound care facility that is not managed by the governing body.

## Overall effectiveness of the school as a Catholic school

St John Vianney is a very good Catholic school with many outstanding features. The newly appointed headteacher and the deputy headteacher, who is also the subject leader, are committed and focus on improving the outcomes for all pupils. Every person is valued and all aspects of school life are influenced by the faith. It is evident from the behaviour of the pupils and the dedication of the staff that there is a strong sense of community and relationships are excellent at all times. Pupils respond willingly and personally to daily prayer and benefit enormously from the Catholic life offered in the school and make an excellent contribution to it. The school has excellent links with the parish community and good links with the local community. Pupil attainment in RE is average or above with all groups of learners making good progress. Children value their school community and their behaviour is excellent. They appreciate the importance of prayer in the life of the school and know how to live out their faith by reflecting upon Gospel values. Pupils are enthusiastic in taking responsibility in various ways to contribute to the life of the school.

The quality of teaching and learning is good with some evidence of outstanding practice. Planning is well organised. Assessment procedures are good and pupils are being tracked across the school. The RE curriculum has been well adapted to suit the learning styles of the children. The provision for collective worship is outstanding. Pupils have many opportunities to pray and reflect together. They were attentive and reverent during the prayer service and the celebration of the Mass, and from their entry into school, are guided to appreciate the importance of prayer in our daily lives.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. Self assessment is mainly accurate and areas for improvement at the last inspection have been addressed. Senior leaders of the school, in particular the subject leader, and all members of staff are committed to the success of the school and the provision of the best possible Catholic education for each child. The governors and the supportive parish priest, who is also the RE link governor give generously of their time and are dedicated to supporting and encouraging the work of the school.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teaching is of a good or better quality by sharing the very effective teaching strategies already in the school.
- Establish a consistent quality in marking pupils' work so that it clearly informs pupils on how they can improve.

## How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils enjoy their learning in RE and progress is good. Baseline assessment shows that children have limited knowledge and understanding in RE; however, where there is religious practice in the family knowledge and understanding is improved. In Key Stage 1 children can recognise some stories from both the Old and New Testaments. They know that Jesus was born in a stable in Bethlehem, called disciples to follow him, told stories with a meaning, performed miracles, died on the cross on Good Friday and rose on Easter Sunday. They know the stories of some of the saints and have an understanding of the Sacrament of Baptism. The children are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church. In Key Stage 2 standards of attainment are mostly average or above average. Children are able to give a more detailed recount of Bible stories using a range of genres. They use thinking skills to analyse and compare different Gospel accounts and relate the parables to modern day circumstances. They have a greater knowledge of the traditional prayers and devotions of the Church and a deeper awareness of the liturgical seasons. Pupils have a good understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation and they understand how this and other sacraments help them to grow in faith. Children with specific learning needs receive very good support from the learning support assistants in class and make good progress.

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is excellent. Children show great care and respect for one another. They know how much each one of them is valued and realise that they too have a duty of care and consideration for all members of the school community. The school offers a range of opportunities for pupils to engage in. The school council has four committees, one is the liturgical committee. Children are directly involved in setting up resources for Mass, assemblies and hymn practices. They prepare their own prayer services, the Leavers' Mass and were responsible for the headteacher's retirement Mass. The school has an effective buddy system where older children support younger children. Children in Year 5 or Year 6 have the opportunity to go on a residential to Alton Castle and a visit to St Chad's Cathedral as part of their preparation for Confirmation.

Mass celebrated in Church during the Inspection was very prayerful and impressive. Readings were delivered by the children with clarity and fervour and the singing was inspirational. At the beginning of the Mass older children brought bowls of water so that each child was able to make the sign of the cross using the water as a reminder of their baptism. The Year 2 children led a prayer service for their families and friends during the inspection. The children were most reverent and spoke with confidence. This was well attended. The parish priest is a hugely supportive figure in the celebration of the Mass and the Sacraments. He is a welcome presence in the school and classroom. He spoke engagingly to the pupils who responded readily to his questions. Overall collective worship makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development and reflects the strong Catholic character of the school.

## How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school

The leadership of the school is committed to sharing their faith to bring Christ to the people in their care. The previous headteacher who retired in July 2011 was an inspirational leader, particularly in her witness to the faith. All staff are committed and caring. They are excellent role models and foster a happy, secure environment in which children and adults can learn and pray together. The school is open to constant improvement and very appreciative of the support given by the parish priest for staff training, teaching and monitoring. The success of the leadership and management is seen in the pupils' excellent behaviour, the care they show to others and the excellent relationships with peers and staff. The school improvement plan and the RE action plan are addressing and monitoring the next steps for improvement.

The leadership and management of RE are very good. The subject leader is well established in the school and makes a substantial contribution to Catholic life and continues to further develop the already strong links with the parish community and has recently set up a parish school liaison

group. Valuable support is offered to all staff through sharing resources, ideas and information. She works very closely with the parish priest, and with the newly appointed headteacher has a shared vision to become an outstanding Catholic school. A range of monitoring activities is carried out through learning walks, scrutiny of work, pupil discussions and gathering views from children and parents.

Governors are committed to supporting the Catholic character of the school and dedicated to providing the best possible Catholic education and are fully supportive of the school. Governors regularly attend school Masses and events throughout the year and they are proud of the school's achievements and promote its values. They have a very clear understanding of its roles and responsibilities and discharge its canonical duties effectively. They know the strengths of the school. The headteacher's report to governors provides them with excellent evidence about the Catholic life. The subject leader feeds back termly to the quality and standards committee and full governors. The parish priest is the RE link governor he visits the school on a weekly basis, engages well with the children and teaches lessons and gives the staff excellent training. The headteacher and staff feel well supported by the governors and work effectively together to take the school further forward.

St John Vianney is a welcoming inclusive Catholic school. Its excellent Catholic ethos ensures that every child is valued and fully integrated into the school community. Gospel values are reflected in the school's caring environment and this helps the children enjoy their learning and achieve their full potential. The school works closely with the parish community and recently a parish liaison has been set up to further strengthen these links. It also has strong links with the local Catholic secondary school. The school marks events such as Remembrance Day, Holocaust Memorial Day, Divali and Chinese New Year. Concern for others is fostered in many ways. The school council runs a range of fund raising activities. At the Harvest Mass tins and packets of food are collected for the local Cyrenian centre. During Lent money is raised for CAFOD, Father Hudson's and for a Malawi village. The school has links with a school in Ireland and very close links with a community in Mexico. The visit of the Pope to Birmingham and the children's involvement in the Big Assembly was a great stimulus to the whole school community and affirmed a sense of belonging to the world wide church and its mission.

## **The quality of the school's work in providing Catholic education**

Teaching is highly effective. Good teaching was observed during the inspection along with some outstanding teaching. Teachers plan well and ensure that there is a variety of activities and a range of recording styles. They have high expectations of the children and provide them with support and resources so that they can meet these expectations. In lessons observed work was well matched to the abilities of all pupils and time was well used. Teachers display good subject knowledge and teaching assistants provide high quality support to groups and individuals. Some excellent questioning techniques were used to enable children to understand the learning objective, offer opinions and develop thinking skills. There are good links with other subjects in particular with literacy and art.

Assessment procedures have been developed in the last two years in line with diocesan guidance. The school has focused on the different strands for assessing RE. Staff evaluate pupil progress and this informs subsequent planning. The school has rightly identified that marking to extend learning is still an area for development.

The RE curriculum is based on the *Curriculum Directory* and the diocesan strategy *Learning and Growing as the People of God*. The time allocation for RE meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. The enrichment of the RE curriculum includes a close association with CAFOD, a residential at Alton Castle, representation at the annual vocations Mass in Coventry and the *Big Sing* liturgy. There are excellent links with the parish for sacramental preparation. The school plans to further develop the RE curriculum as part of its plans to make the curriculum more creative. The diocesan programme *All that I Am* is in place and used as a basis for family life and sex education. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

The provision for collective worship is excellent and central to the life of the school. Staff work hard to provide quality experiences of prayer and liturgy to enhance pupils' spiritual development. There are regular whole school and class Masses and prayer services are celebrated and well attended by parents, parishioners and governors. Pupils are invited to pray the Rosary during October and May and at other times of the year. The Sacrament of Reconciliation takes place in Advent and Lent. Children are being given some opportunities to be involved in planning collective worship. The children in Year 6 in the liturgy sub-committee support collective worship and they have lots of ideas on how they can further develop their role within the school. The parish priest effectively helps and supports staff in their provision of worship. Each class has their own class saint and a prominent prayer focus to reflect the liturgical year. Colourful displays around the school emphasis the school's strong Catholic identity.