



Archdiocese of Birmingham

INSPECTION REPORT

ST CHAD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hospital Street, Newtown, Birmingham, B19 3XD

Inspection dates	8 th - 9 th June 2015
Reporting Inspector	Sister Susan Collins

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-11years
Number on roll	204
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Brenda Beale
Telephone number	0121 464 6554
E-mail address	enquiry@st-chads.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2010
DFE School Number	330 3337
Unique Reference Number	103435

Headteacher	Matthew Tehan
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Previous inspection:	2
This inspection:	2



Evidence

- The inspection was carried out by one Diocesan Inspector.
- 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 three 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 the chair of governors, a foundation governor, staff and the parish priest.
- The inspector attended a whole school Mass and assembly 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 improvement plan, and teachers' planning were read alongside the self-evaluation.

Information about the school

- St Chad's is a smaller than average size Catholic primary school serving the parish of St Chad in Birmingham.
- St Chad's is in an area of social deprivation.
- The number of Catholic pupils is currently 56%.
- The proportion of ethnic minority pupils is 95%.
- The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 56.7%.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is above average.
- Attainment on entry is below the national average for a large majority of pupils.

Main Findings

- St Chad's is a school in which Catholic life, collective worship and RE are good. The judgement in the school's self-evaluation that they are good is accurate and well evidenced.
- The school's leadership team is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education.
- The faith of the headteacher permeates every aspect of school life and he has all members of staff and governors working with him to ensure that outcomes for pupils are improved.
- The monitoring and evaluation of RE has improved significantly in the last twenty months, particularly in the monitoring of planning and pupils' books.
- Improvement planning in all areas is marked by clear priorities, success criteria and reviewed at appropriate intervals; supported by a programme of professional development.

School self evaluation

Catholic Life and Collective Worship

- Self-evaluation is an integral part of St Chad's school in which senior leaders, staff and governors are all involved.
- Strengths of the school are identified and the processes used to monitor and evaluate are developing.
- The school judges Catholic life accurately in many informal ways; senior staff and governors are committed to ensuring that in the future there will be formal evidence of monitoring and evaluation using the materials developed by the Diocesan Education Service.
- Leaders and governors show an unwavering commitment to developing the Catholic life of the school, including strengthening existing partnerships with the extended Catholic community.
- The school has formed a Catholic life team which is highly effective in enhancing and promoting the Catholic life of the school. They produced a comprehensive report for governors in February 2015 detailing their work and the impact this has had on further developing the Catholic life at St Chad's.
- All staff, including the headteacher, have Catholic life as part of their performance management.
- Improvement planning is detailed with clear time scales; however it needs to link more closely with outcomes from self-evaluation.
- The mission statement, devised by members of the RE club, is a constant point of reference and opportunities for reflection upon this mission are embedded within the daily life and routines of the school. Pupils are now planning to collate a school prayer book.
- Pupils feel that their views are important and their suggestions are acted upon. The school council raised money to facilitate a whole school project on designing the school's new Stations of the Cross; involving every child in school by laying a piece in the mosaic crosses at the top of each station. They also helped to set up a school in Eritrea.
- Collective worship is monitored by the Catholic life team and staff have appreciated the advice and support they have been given to improve the quality of the acts of worship. A prayer service held for the staff showing them how to help and support the children when they are writing acts of worship. This resulted in the staff gaining in confidence.
- Pupils help to prepare and lead worship using the four fold structure with confidence, enthusiasm and joy. Their art work is used on the PowerPoint presentations to help the pupils' with Mass responses and guide them through the Mass.

Governance

- Governance at the school is very strong. The chair and vice-chair of governors are both experienced diocesan inspectors and have a significant impact on ensuring that the outcomes for the children are improved. They carried out a one day review of worship, Catholic life and RE in February which validated the school's own judgements in their self-evaluation and gave the school detailed feedback to help them move forward.

- All governors are well informed about the strengths of the school because of their regular visits, their involvement in learning walks, regular meetings with senior staff and from the quality of the information they regularly receive from the school.
- The 'Catholic life' governing body committee meet half termly to discuss the progress of the current improvement plan, provide appropriate challenge and review actions.
- The governors are committed to supporting the staff, appreciating the improvements that have been made over the last twenty months, particularly in teaching and learning.
- The link governor for RE who is also an RE subject leader in the local secondary school, works closely and effectively with the Catholic life team.

Religious Education

- The school's judgement that teaching, learning and assessment are good can be validated as reliable.
- RE is strongly led by the deputy headteacher who supports the staff with planning and assessment. She carefully analyses performance data, beginning with baseline assessments on entry to school and ensures that provision for all pupils is appropriate to individual ability and need.
- Staff are given individual feedback after monitoring has taken place. Key messages are shared with all the staff and senior leaders identify further support needed. Teachers feel very well supported by the subject leader.
- Plans are in place to further develop the systems to monitor the quality and impact of teaching so that all staff are observed at least once a year.
- Assessment procedures have improved. Formative and summative assessments and unit evaluations are carried out by teachers and this is used to inform future planning and teaching.
- The RE curriculum is broad and balanced, thoughtfully planned with clear links to the *Curriculum Directory* and the diocesan programme, *Learning and Growing as the People of God*, and is accessible to all.
- Pupils' views are sought through discussion. They enjoy all their RE lessons because they work in different ways. The particularly enjoy acting out Bible stories.
- Governors maintain a careful oversight of RE and effectively fulfil their statutory and canonical duties.

Overall effectiveness of the school¹

- Attainment in RE is low on entry to school, but the progress of all groups of learners is at least good.
- Children make good progress in Key Stage 1 so that their work is mainly in line with diocesan expectations and standards in Key Stage 2 are in line or better for some EAL children.
- The quality of the teaching is improving across the school as a result of the support that staff are receiving from the headteacher and deputy headteacher.

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 teaching is good or better. Teachers use high quality questioning in both teaching and developmental marking to probe children's understanding, challenging them to think at a deeper level.
- Pupils who need extra guidance, especially those who have special educational needs, are well supported and helped to make good progress.
- The RE books are marked effectively using 'green for seen' and 'pink to make you think' policy; this gives the pupils detailed feedback.
- Assessment procedures have improved and staff are more confident in assessing work in line with Diocesan expectations.
- The RE curriculum is carefully planned to support the spiritual, moral and vocational development of all pupils and all members of staff seek ways to support and enrich the curriculum. There is clear progression between key stages.
- As part of the curriculum, children are given opportunities to gain knowledge about other faiths and cultures through the shared values which are central to each faith. Each class visits a different place of worship.
- Pupils take on responsibility and fully participate in the Catholic life of the school. They volunteer for activities which support the local community. The school council makes informed choices on the charities they would like to support during the year.
- The school environment is rich in excellent artefacts, displays and symbols of the faith. Pupils make excellent contributions to the displays as their first language is evident on the displays in the hall.
- The school has been awarded the 'School of Sanctuary' status in recognition of the way support is offered for asylum seekers and refugees.
- Provision for collective worship is very good with the celebration of the weekly Mass a central part of school life. Children sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers with reverence and confidence.
- Strong links exist between the school and the parish. The school has strengthened links with the Cathedral and the parish priest and a Sister of St Paul play a supportive role in many aspects of school life.
- Sacramental preparation is well led and sessions for pupils, their parents and carers are well attended. This has strengthened the links between the parish and the school.
- The governors are very committed, fully active and supportive in the Catholic life and teaching of RE.
- The positive relationships and exemplary behaviour exhibited throughout the school, and the way the children are encouraged and enabled to live out their Christian mission, shows that they thrive in the strong Catholic ethos which is evident throughout the school.

Recommendations

- Undertake formal monitoring of Catholic life of the school by using the materials developed by the Diocesan Education Service.
- Ensure all staff understand what makes 'outstanding' teaching in RE and its impact on successful learning to help move all lessons from good to outstanding.
- Seek external expertise to ensure that teachers are equipped to offer further challenge to more able pupils.



June 2015

Diocesan Education Service,
Don Bosco House,
Coventry Road,
Coleshill,
B46 3EA

Dear Parents and Carers

Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of St Chad's Catholic Primary School, June 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 Chad's is a welcoming, Catholic school where every child is valued and fully integrated into the school and where Catholic life and RE are of good quality. RE and Catholic life are led effectively because of the leadership of the headteacher and his deputy headteacher. They are assisted in their work by a committed, unified team. The school's mission underpins all that the school does. The governors are committed in their support of the staff and appreciate the work that they do every day in bringing the faith alive. Catholic life, provision for collective worship, and pupils' response to them are good. Children are given opportunities to gain knowledge about other faiths and cultures through the shared values which are central to each faith. The quality of teaching of religious education is good and sometimes very good. The learning is enhanced by the relationships throughout the school and the care shown to the children by all members of staff. As a consequence of the good teaching, pupils make good progress through the school and reach expected diocesan standards by the end of Year 6.

I have recommended that the school should continue to ensure that teaching in RE is consistently good or better in all lessons; that it offers further challenge to more able pupils. I have recommended that staff and governors should explore more formal ways of monitoring and evaluating the Catholic life at St Chad's so as to further inform improvement planning.

It was a pleasure to spend two days in your school because every member of the school community, staff, children and governors were all very welcoming and keen to share what makes St Chad's school such a faith filled place. The children were delightful, polite, well behaved and able to articulate the importance of their learning in RE. They are a credit to their school, their families and all those who care for them.

Yours sincerely,

Sister Susan Collins
Diocesan Inspector



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