



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## INSPECTION REPORT

### ST AUGUSTINE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Heathcote Street, Radford, Coventry, CV6 3BL

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Inspection dates 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> October 2015  
Reporting Inspector Mrs Bernadette O'Shea

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 -11years
Number on roll	366
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Canon Tom Farrell
Telephone number	02476 596988
E-mail address	headteacher@st-augustines.coventry.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	October 2010
DFE School Number	331 3422
Unique Reference Number	103720
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Helen Forrest
Previous inspection:	2
This inspection:	2

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## Evidence

- The inspection was carried out by 1 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 6 full lessons across three year bands with the headteacher/RE subject leader.
- 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/parish priest, staff, and link governor.
- The inspector observed an assembly, prayer services 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 Augustine's is a larger than average Catholic primary school serving the parish of Christ the King in Coventry.
- St Augustine's is in a mixed area of social housing with higher than average social deprivation
- The number of Catholic pupils is currently 64%.
- The proportion of ethnic minority pupils is above average at 50%.
- The number of pupils eligible for a free school meal is higher than average as are the numbers with special needs and/or disabilities.
- Attainment on entry is below the the national average overall.

## Main Findings

- St Augustine's School judges its collective worship and Catholic life to be good and its RE as requiring improvement to be good. This judgement is based on the school's self-evaluation processes that have been validated during the inspection. As a result, the capacity for the school to build upon, and improve its provision further, is good.
- Self-evaluation for the collective worship and Catholic life is good. This is a reflection of the highly committed, newly formed, dynamic and dedicated leadership team who are excellently led by the headteacher. The school works closely with the parish thoroughly preparing the pupils for their journey of faith involving parents, carers and the community as integral parts of this process
- Prayer experiences are both participative and reflective. Pupils are immersed in a community founded on teaching the Word, witness to the Word, worship and the practical application of the Word, resulting in their being able to articulate clearly how Jesus and the Gospel relate to, and inform, their own lives. Pupils lead and manage prayer successfully and with growing confidence.
- Self-evaluation of RE is judged by the school as requiring improvement to be good. This is validated by the inspection. The SLT has implemented strategies to rapidly improve the standards of attainment and, in particular, progress across the school, over the last four terms. Strategies include close monitoring of planning, scrutiny of books, observation of lessons and evaluation of children's work for moderation and assessment outcomes. This focused work is leading to a much improved curriculum for the pupils.
- The school is inclusive of all irrespective of gender, ethnicity, ability or disability, culture, faith or socio economic background providing clear evidence that the school lives out their mission statement: "Hand in hand, united in happiness and friendship, we listen to God's call, we learn from God's Word and we share God's love."

## School self evaluation

### Catholic Life and Collective Worship

- Evaluation of collective worship is good. The pupils are involved in planning their own liturgies with the recently formed liturgy group displaying energy and enthusiasm for the role. They are encouraged to contribute towards senior leadership meetings effecting change to school prayer services to enable pupils to have more participation and, in their own words, "enjoyment". Governors evaluate collective worship through the ethos, performance and standards committee meetings where minutes reveal improvements are made accordingly.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team regularly give feedback to staff of their evaluations of Mass and liturgies. The parish priest evaluates Holy Mass participation and gives clear guidelines for improvement to staff.
- In addition, the pupil voice is listened to in the liturgy group and pupils' ideas are discussed and implemented, resulting in pupils knowing they have contributed positively to promoting collective worship. Pupils' comments included "we talk with the headteacher about how to improve the assemblies and Masses and she listens" and "It's great that we can do more".
- Collective worship is strength of the school.

- Pupils act with reverence and respect and understand that there are different ways to pray. They can articulate clearly their understanding of religious seasons, feasts and parts of the liturgy. Pupil interviews revealed their enjoyment of collective worship with comments such as “I like the silence we have so I can really think about God and what he does for me “ and “the singing makes me happy and joyful.... I'm glad I'm at this school”.
- Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility through their regular *holy time* practice at the school. Year 6 plan their liturgies for Year 1 enabling them to think through their own understanding of the Word before teaching the younger children. Pupils say that this responsibility encourages them to ask more questions about their faith journey as they want to “get it right” for the Year 1 children.
- Parents were happy about the collective worship provision with many commenting on how much the children enjoy their liturgies.
- There is a close partnership with the local Catholic feeder secondary school involving chaplaincy work led by the link governor for RE, who is also a foundation governor and teacher of RE in the secondary school. As a consequence of this good partnership, the pupils have enjoyed a well-planned, highly focused retreat day, which is now planned to be an annual event. Staff have also received high quality continuing professional development (CPD) relating to aspects of collective worship, which has contributed significantly to the quality of their planning.
- The school has been successful in reviewing and renewing their mission statement (September 2015). Evidence shows the involvement of all pupils in the school, together with governors and parents in this process. As a result, pupils can articulate clearly the school's mission and the importance of living our lives in the witness of Christ. Artwork and photographs displayed around the school represent the thorough contribution of the children to this process as well as governors and parents.
- St Augustine's Catholic School is able to demonstrate that pupils understand the idea of service and respond readily to the needs of people beyond the school through their many charitable events - Harvest contributions, Father Hudson's Society, contribution to food banks, and pupils' own choice of which charities they would like to support during Lent.
- Evidence of evaluations by the senior team of aspects of the Catholic life of the school demonstrates that the school is aware of the strengths and weaknesses. The school has identified that they need to give the children a wider variety of opportunities to consider vocations and further develop the children's' responsibility in the wider community as well as a visiting more places of worship of other faiths. These are some examples of the outcomes of evaluations which are now actioned for 2015/16 which inform and allow focus for the development of the Catholic life of St Augustine's.
- Performance management targets for the senior team promote the Catholic life of the school. Self-evaluation by the school reveals that this now needs to be included in the performance management of all staff.

## Governance

- The governors are committed to the school and its Catholicity. Minutes reveal discussions about Catholic life and strategies to employ to develop it further i.e. the retreat day.
- The chair of governors/parish priest displays a very committed determination to support and develop the newly formed senior leadership team ensuring, with the governors, that the school provides a rich, broad, balanced curriculum with the development of spiritual, moral, cultural, vocational and social development featuring as priorities.
- Governors are fully aware of the need to improve the provision for RE. They support the headteacher and her staff with key actions which are being fully implemented to secure the necessary progress such as monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes of the findings from the headteacher and RE subject leader.

## Religious Education

- The school has implemented significant improvement strategies over the last five terms to raise the standards in religious education. These include CPD for all teachers focused on planning and assessment; delivery of lessons with clear differentiation and marking of pupils' work. Whilst these improvements are having a rapid and positive effect, the school judgement that RE requires improvement to be good is accurate.
- Progress and development points since the last inspection have been made. The school has appointed a senior leader to the post of RE subject leader; begun to provide appropriate training to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching in RE; and begun to review the whole school curriculum and assessment procedures.
- The school has undergone several changes of leadership since the last inspection and has acknowledged the need to embed the strategies.
- The RE leader demonstrates a clear understanding of the processes needed to improve pupil outcomes in RE. Through discussions centred on action planning, she can clearly articulate the systematic and rigorous monitoring that is required to ensure consistency throughout the school resulting in rapidly improving standards for RE.
- Assessments have been completed and analysed for 2014/15. Discussions with the senior team confirmed that further professional development for staff in assessment is required and is actioned.
- Lessons observed were variable in quality. Where the teaching was good, pupils were able to make clear links between the scripture message being taught and the meaning to their life and that of others in the world. In Year 3, pupils were immersed in work focused on being forgiven and to forgive. Good opportunities were given for reflection on their feelings and application of their faith to life. The classes were challenged with the question "if someone keeps hurting you-should you forgive them?" Pupils' discussions immediately related to human instinct when challenged with this situation and then demonstrated their ability to think through the situation with a deep regard towards their faith formation. Where lessons were less than good either the children did not understand what they had to do or the tasks did not

further the learning related to the original learning objective leading to pupils' work being unrelated to the original discussions and/or foci

- Book scrutiny reveals that presentation of work has improved rapidly over the last four terms. This still continues to be a focused action for the RE leader.
- Books show that teachers are developing the skill of relating the learning about religion to the learning from religion and that this area of improvement is having a positive effect on the standards of RE. Tasks in many of the books are overly dependent on writing frames which severely limit the amount the pupils write. The length and quality of what is written is being actioned by the subject leader.
- 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.

### **Overall effectiveness of the school<sup>1</sup>**

- The school's internal data is incomplete over the last three years. The 2014/15 data, which was available, shows many of the learner groups (boys, pupil premium and SEN) are below age related expectations. The school acknowledges that they need to urgently review their assessment procedures, analysis of data, and intervention required so that progress measures can be in place to evaluate and lead actions for future development.
- At least 10% of the curriculum time is dedicated to the teaching of RE in the classroom. The RE curriculum used is "Learning and Growing as the 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.
- Family life and sex education is delivered in line with the teachings of the Catholic Church using the Archdiocesan scheme.
- The sacramental programmes are well developed and are reviewed by governors, senior team, staff, parents and pupils. Parents praise the sacramental programmes finding them "interesting and useful".
- Parents value the work of the school considerably, and comment that their children are "happy and keen to come to school".
- Collective worship is of a high quality with a strong partnership existing between the parish and school. The parish priest visits regularly, supporting the pupils' learning with particular reference to their prayer life and liturgy.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are proud of their school and the work they do. They were able to describe the many charitable events that they take part in. The pupils understood that Gospel values, together with British values, provide clear guidelines for the way we live out God's Word. They understand the importance forgiveness plays in living as a follower of Jesus.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Recommendations

- Build upon the recently developed monitoring and evaluation of attainment in RE with particular reference to school assessment procedures ensuring that the learner group attainment is analysed, discussed and that planned intervention, where necessary, takes place.
- Ensure that progress for pupils in RE is measured and analysed, and, where necessary, interventions are implemented to secure and deepen pupils' religious knowledge and understanding over the whole of their primary phase.
- Ensure that the governing body is focused on a thorough evaluation of the school with clear criteria and accountability for standards of attainment and progress in religious education.



October 2015

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

Dear Parents and Carers

**Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Coventry  
5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> October 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 Augustine's is a good school. The headteacher and her senior leadership team lead with clarity and vision ensuring that the pupils in their care receive good Catholic life provision and a rapidly improving RE provision. Together with the governors they evaluate the school with a deep commitment towards improving on previous best. They are currently implementing rigorous strategies to ensure that the teaching of RE will be improved and that attainment is at least in line with the diocesan average. The children display, at age appropriate levels, a knowledge and understanding of Catholic beliefs, teachings and sources, celebration and ritual, social and moral practices and way of life. Their participation in the collective worship is good, demonstrated by very attentive listening and carefully thought out answers to questions as individuals, pairs and groups. Whilst RE requires some improvement to be good, the teachers are rapidly implementing new strategies learned through focused professional development to move this very important area of teaching and learning to good. In addition, the staff are focusing on the assessment of pupils' standards and ensuring moderation of work across the school is matched to diocesan expectations. The school continues to work hard to narrow the gap in attainment for different learner groups. St Augustine's provides many opportunities for the pupils to "learn and grow as God's people" in their personal development and have been evaluating this more effectively over the last academic year. Parents are happy with the school and the good education and pastoral care received.

We have recommended to the headteacher that the school continues to build upon the recently developed monitoring and evaluation of RE attainment, assessment and progress procedures across the school in order to raise achievement. In addition, we have asked the governing body to focus on a thorough evaluation of the school with clear criteria and accountability regarding raising the standards in religious education in the school.

I would like to thank your children for their warm welcome and the continued courtesy shown throughout the inspection. A further thank you goes to the headteacher and her staff, governors and parents interviewed.

Yours sincerely

Bernadette O'Shea  
Diocesan Inspector