



Archdiocese of Birmingham

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL DUDLEY

Inspection dates 3rd-4th December 2013
Reporting Inspector Teresa Quick

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	208
Appropriate authority	The Board of Directors St John Bosco MAC
Chair of Board of Directors	Gaynor Rennicks
Chair of Academy Committee	Andrew Bant
School address	Hillcrest Road Dudley DY2 7PW
Telephone number	01384 818925
E-mail address	info@st-jo-dud.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2008
DFE School number	332/3302
Unique Reference Number	140147

Headteacher **Mark Hinton**

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



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 4 full and 2 part RE lessons with the headteacher. In addition the inspector completed a work scrutiny and held a discussion with pupils to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time. She held meetings with the directors of the Academy, academy committee members, staff, and parish priest. She observed collective worship, a class prayer service, a meditation, an assertive mentoring session 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. She looked at a range of evidence related to the school's self evaluation such as RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals.

Information about the school

St Joseph's is an average size Catholic primary school with a maintained nursery. It is part of the St John Bosco Catholic Academy which includes 2 primary schools and a secondary school. It serves the parishes of Our Blessed Lady and St Thomas of Canterbury, Dudley, and Sacred Heart and Holy Souls, Tipton. The school has higher than national average numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups and this is rising steadily. The proportion of ethnic minority pupils forms two thirds of the pupil numbers. The school has an above average number of pupils in receipt of free school meals, English as an additional language, as well as the numbers with special needs and/or disabilities. The school's deprivation indicator is also high. The number of Catholic pupils is currently 59%, with a higher number of Catholic pupils in the Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 4. Attainment on entry is low.

Main Finding

In its self evaluation the school rightly judges itself to be an outstanding Catholic school. It gives an accurate description of the school, what it needs to do to improve still further, with the clear processes to be employed. It provides pupils with an outstanding Catholic life and an excellent curriculum for religious education which is very well delivered with a strong commitment by all staff. The ethos and pupils' spiritual, moral and vocational development are excellent. Teaching which promotes purposeful learning is outstanding. Children's knowledge and understanding of the faith starts from a low base and by Year 6 it is good. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are well developed for Catholic life including collective worship and RE. Behaviour is exemplary. Subject leadership is outstanding. With their strong commitment to the faith and their desire to make the religious life of the school an enjoyable learning experience for the pupils the leadership team gives the school excellent capacity to continue to raise attainment in RE. Pupils have an extremely positive attitude to RE. The school and parish are flourishing together. The school enjoys very good links with its partners in the academy and with the local community.

School self evaluation

Self evaluation at St Joseph's is an accurate and realistic picture of where the school is in its Catholic life and religious education. There are clear steps towards further improvement identified. The school has a thorough understanding and pride in the mission of the school as part of the worldwide Church and the local school community. There is a strong commitment to raise within the children positive attitudes towards themselves and others

through a strong ethos of care and respect for all by providing the best possible religious life experiences and education for the pupils.

The summative self-evaluation is a document written by the senior leadership team with input from staff, directors and academy committee members. Evidence from the self evaluation leads to in-service provision for staff provided within school and with external training. The impact of this training and support is a confident staff with the knowledge to impart an inspiring curriculum for religious education. This is evidenced in individual files for the different aspects of RE. There is a clear vocation curriculum but in interview pupils had a limited view of vocation. There is informal monitoring and detailed regular formal monitoring and evaluation of both the Catholic life and the teaching and learning in RE which gives a very clear picture of each child's needs. The monitoring and assessment of Catholic life ensures that pupils have the skills to articulate the school's distinctive mission and can relate this to how they live out Gospel values. There is very good provision for sacramental preparation. Collective worship is judged to be outstanding. Inspection found that the staff produce some inspiring prayer services and meditations with the pupils. The children's liturgy team help with the preparation of these services. Pupils are increasingly involved in the planning and preparation. Pupils are gaining confidence with formal and informal prayers and spontaneous bidding prayers of supplication or thanksgiving. There is a child-centred school area for quiet prayer. Pupils are generous in their support to those less fortunate than themselves both locally and for the Church worldwide through CAFOD. There are excellent relationships between the teachers and the pupils in all prayer services and behaviour is outstanding. The subject leader and the headteacher work closely with the parish priest. Mass is said regularly in school. There is a parish /school Mass on one Sunday a month. These are very well supported by staff and parents. Directors, governors and priest praise the impact the school is having on the general Mass attendance in the parish. There is an appropriate challenge to the school from the directors and the link academy committee member. Their knowledge and challenge gives an overall judgement for leadership and management of the Catholic life as outstanding.

The school judges the provision for RE to be outstanding. The subject leader supports the staff in gaining a high level of expertise, commitment and enthusiasm. Planning is carefully monitored. Assessment is good and staff are becoming more confident in its use. The judgement that teaching is outstanding is realistic as is the judgement that pupils make outstanding progress with attainment that is above average overall. There is excellent teaching assistant support for learning. Pupils work well individually and in collaboration. All pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning as confirmed by the pupil questionnaires. Tasks are varied to meet individual needs. Books are regularly monitored. Marking is good and regularly enhances individual pupils' learning. There is a clear link between the quality and quantity of work in English books and RE books. Differing styles of recording are evident. The curriculum judged as outstanding covers all aspects expected of a RE curriculum in a Catholic school. It is broad, balanced and integrated into all subjects. Time allocation each week for RE meets that required of the Bishops' Conference.

Overall effectiveness of the school¹

This is a Catholic school where the outstanding leadership of the headteacher with the deputy headteacher and the subject leader permeates the whole school and ensures that outcomes for pupils are above what could be expected. Directors and academy committee members regularly monitor and have a strong involvement in promoting and ensuring the Catholicity of the school. Pupils enter school with limited knowledge of prayer and the life of Jesus. In Year 2 they are working well to be in line with diocesan expectations. Year 6 are

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.

generally working at a level where many will be above diocesan expectations. They are given the opportunity to discuss the faith and moral issues which is leading them to develop and become mature thinkers. Differing traditional prayers of the Church are taught as the pupils move through the school with each year having its own prayer book. All lessons start with prayer. Teaching provides a range of different activities that encourage enthusiasm in pupils and help their learning. All pupils achieve well. Pupils with SEND receive very good support from teaching assistants and their teachers so as to make progress in line with their peers. The school has a very supportive assertive mentoring system. The response of pupils in lessons is excellent as they enjoy what they are doing. The ethos of the school, the Catholic life and the teaching in RE all support the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Pupils show respect for the other pupils, and the adults with whom they come into contact. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are polite and welcoming and proud of their school. The approaches to prayer life provided by the school are excellent. A variety of liturgies take place at different times of year.

Provision is outstanding. The quality of teaching ensures that pupils make consistent progress as they journey through the school. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the RE curriculum. There is excellent support from the subject leader and the senior managers and excellent co-operative peer support. Planning meets the needs of individual pupils. Very good support is provided by the teaching assistants to support learning. There are opportunities for differing types of written work. Pupils' books are monitored each term. Marking is positive and supports pupils' individual learning. There is very good planning for RE which is regularly monitored ensuring consistent progression. Systems of assessment and monitoring are good and are being developed to enhance knowledge to support pupils' learning further. The school uses the Diocesan Strategy for Religious Education as the basis for learning. They enhance the curriculum well with many visits and have clear links to the other subjects. Art, music and ICT are used well to support learning in RE. The family life programme used is the diocesan *All That I Am* programme. The school is culturally diverse. Pupils are taught to respect one another. There is an air of calm with pupils developing their understanding of peace, tolerance and understanding. The curriculum is developed well to include work on other faiths and visits have taken place to the places of worship of other faiths and other Christian faiths.

Recommendations

In order for the school to improve still further they should:-

- Involve children more in the planning and organisation of the liturgy
- Further develop the vocational curriculum