



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Part of the Romero Catholic Academy

Langbank Avenue, Coventry, CV3 2QP

Inspection date 25th & 26th January 2017

Reporting Inspector Mr T J Hughes

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils 4 – 11 years

Number on roll 353

Appropriate authority The Board of Directors

Chair of Governors Louise Condie

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Date of previous inspection 29th February 2012

DFE School Number 331/3434

Unique Reference Number 142195

Principal Mrs D Newman

Previous inspection: 2

This inspection: 2

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



Evidence

- The inspection was carried out by one Diocesan Inspector.
- The focus of the inspection was on the quality, leadership, and impact of the school's provision of Catholic life, collective worship, and religious education (RE).
- The inspector observed teaching across 8 RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these lessons were conducted jointly with the principal and the RE leader.
- The inspector completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic life, worship, and the impact of teaching on their learning over time.
- Meetings were held with the chair of governors, the link governor for RE, an academy director, governors, the principal, the RE subject leader, class teachers and the parish priest.
- The inspector attended the celebration of Mass, a whole school 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.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents including the school's self evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning and learning journals.

Information about the school

- The school is situated in the parish of Corpus Christi and serves the community South West of Coventry.
- The percentage of ethnic minority pupils is double the national average.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 60%.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special needs is below the national average.
- Attainment on entry is below national expectations.
- In the past year the principal has taken on the role as interim executive principal at another local Catholic primary school within the Romero Catholic Academy (MAC).

Main Findings

- At Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School the Catholic life, collective worship and religious education are good with a number of outstanding features.
- The principal is an outstanding leader of the Catholic life of the school and as a result of her vision the school is going from strength to strength.
- Pupils enter school with low starting points and they make very good progress in attainment of religious education.
- The pupils' response to all aspects of faith is outstanding; they are thoughtful and inquisitive and demonstrate maturity and confidence.
- The teaching of RE is good with an increasing proportion outstanding.

- The outstanding RE curriculum motivates the pupils, building incrementally on their knowledge, skills and spiritual perceptions.
- Collective worship in the school is reverent and uplifting.
- The pupils' participation in collective worship would be enhanced by having a greater range of children, from different age groups, taking a lead in planning and delivering celebrations.
- Good leadership of religious education has given rise to many improvements and supports the rich provision which staff deliver with increasing skill and insight.
- The local academy committee representatives and MAC directors are committed to securing and providing excellent Catholic education.
- There is a genuine desire amongst the school leaders to help the children develop in their faith and love of God.
- The celebrations of the sacraments are very special to the children and their families, and the school aspires to support even more children in receiving the sacraments.
- To improve further the school should increase the amount of outstanding teaching.
- Pupils would benefit from exploring ideas about vocation.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

Catholic life, collective worship and spiritual, moral and vocational development: provision and outcomes

- The Catholic life of the school is good with some outstanding features.
- The school is unified by its mission and pupils genuinely reflect on how they are walking in Christ's footsteps.
- The consistency of approach to Catholic life and the way in which it is made manifest is a real strength of the school. All members of the school family appreciate the care they receive, aspire to share the mission and reflect upon how their faith will inform their development as people.
- The principal strives to attain the richest possible spiritual environment. She works tirelessly to lead the faith in the school, unite the staff and inspire the pupils. Despite a growing school roll, staff changes and the additional responsibility of an interim executive principal role, the principal has presided over a notable improvement in the quality of the Catholic life despite raised diocesan expectations.
- The staff team are totally united in illustrating the school's mission and bringing it alive for the children. As a result, the experiences for all children are spiritually rich and supportive, helping the pupils, whatever their needs, to thrive and realise success in all aspects of life.
- The contribution that the pupils make to the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. Whether in their written work or illustrations, their discussions and questions or during collective worship, the children demonstrate real insight into faith and a sincere curiosity about God in their lives.
- The school is very successful in nurturing pupils to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and develop sanctity as they grow through the school.
- Prayer and collective worship at Corpus Christi is good and often outstanding.

- The uplifting celebrations are central to the personal growth of every member of the school family.
- Mass is celebrated by the parish priest most weeks in the parish church. This celebration is sacred and carefully planned by the staff and pupils with advice from the parish priest.
- Parents and governors attend the school Masses and further support the prayer life of the children by attending the parish Masses at the weekend. As a result, the pupils embrace the celebration of Mass with reverence and commitment. In turn the programme for sacramental celebration has strengthened and Mass attendance for the given pupils has improved.
- The principal and other staff lead a mission assembly each week where they reflect on aspects of the liturgical year, explore key values and focus on Gospel messages.
- Children are familiar with prayer being led by many different individuals. The chaplaincy team, which comprises of pupils from upper Key Stage 2, often takes a lead in organising and presenting whole school assemblies. They act as spiritual role models for younger pupils. This excellent practice now needs to be extended to younger pupils.
- Collective worship helps the pupils to make connections for life in the 21st century by prompting them to understand what the scriptures and teachings of Jesus mean in their lives today.
- Pupils are always highly reverent and engaged during Mass and assembly. They experience a variety of prayer: open prayer; traditional prayers; prayers through song, including the school's own mission song written by the pupils.
- Pupils show commitment to being part of key celebrations throughout the liturgical year by attending events outside of school. This participation extends to multi-school celebrations co-ordinated by the MAC as well as key diocesan events. A significant number of reliable and willing altar servers participate in services across the diocese.
- There is a systematic monitoring and evaluation cycle in place, which supports the development of the Catholic life of the school. The senior leadership team undertake a range of weekly monitoring activities. This has resulted in secure support for newer members of staff in delivering consistent and high quality Catholic life.
- The governors regularly engage with the Catholic life of the school, appreciating the depth of the spiritual environment of the school and contributing to its development. Governors have not yet established comprehensive formal systems for monitoring Catholic life.
- Children enjoy visits from the parish priest who is a regular visitor to the school to lead collective worship, support lessons or to talk to the children about an aspect of the RE strategy and the sacramental programme. The prayer life of the school and many RE lessons are enhanced by his ministry.
- Pupils engage with enthusiasm in the promotion of charity for national and international causes. For example, this year the children participated in fund raising for 'Zoe's Place', a charity which runs hospices for babies and infants. Pupils have visited elderly members of the community at 'Poppy Court' to offer their friendship

and care. The pupils have also routinely supported CAFOD to show their understanding and care for disadvantaged communities across the world.

- The Gospel values are embraced daily by the pupils as evidenced by their excellent behaviour in school. The behaviour policy is underpinned by forgiveness and self reflection and results in the pupils having a clear sense of right and wrong and a sincere concern for how they treat one another.
- The pupils see it as their vocation to contribute to faith enriching experiences to serve the parish and the school, for example as members of the chaplaincy team, the school council or 'playground pals'. Their understanding of how they might use their gifts from God in a wider range of activities or professions in the future is limited and they would benefit from exploring these issues in greater depth.
- The pupils play an important role in leading the Catholic life of the school. They are sensitive to the emotional and spiritual needs of everyone in the school community. This empathy inspires the prayers that they share and influences their actions as members of the various councils that they are part of.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and collective worship

- The outstanding leadership of the principal, and the manner in which she has developed the Catholic life of the school as it grows in size and structure, has secured a strong faith filled community at Corpus Christi.
- The principal recognises the God given potential in each individual member of the school family. She nurtures both the pupils and the staff as they work together to fulfil the school mission statement every day. As a result, all pupils, whatever their life experiences, are able to grow in faith and personal strength and achieve in their tasks.
- The principal has the highest expectations of the staff team and the pupils, and has built a productive relationship with the parish and other local Catholic schools within the Romero Catholic Academy. The growth and enrichment of the Catholic life is uppermost in all that she plans and manages, and as a result the school has moved forward.
- In serving as an interim executive principal of another local Catholic primary school within the MAC, the principal, with the senior staff, are building a wider community committed to spiritual growth and progress.
- The governors are dedicated and active in their evaluation of the school's spirituality and promotion of Gospel values. They assess provision through learning walks, the scrutiny of pupils' work, attendance at assemblies and through the reports and discussions at meetings with the principal and senior teachers. They recognise the need to establish more formal processes for auditing the quality of the school's Catholic provision so that they can be more strategic in their governance and be clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The governors are sincere in their desire to uphold the mission of the school. They have a very real sense of the strong Catholic heritage of the school and the wealth

of faith and care it can offer to many children and families both now and in the future.

- The challenge that the governors exert is realistic and focussed on improvement. For example, they recently scrutinised the allocation of the budget for RE and steered the senior leaders towards investing in a greater wealth of RE resources.
- The governors support the school in the constructive relationship that it has with all of the schools within the MAC. The enthusiasm of the governors for joint working is encouraging and this momentum will clearly bring about better Catholic education for Corpus Christi and the sister schools within the MAC.
- The leadership of the school has worked in a systematic way to monitor provision and the judgements determined in the school's own self evaluation are consistent with the evidence found during this inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- The provision of religious education at Corpus Christi is good.
- The quality of the curriculum for RE is outstanding.
- RE is very well led by the co-ordinators. They routinely monitor and reflect upon the school's provision, adjusting and enhancing planning, teaching, learning and assessment to achieve high standards.
- Although the RE leadership team is relatively new, the co-ordinators have already made a significant impact on the quality of the provision. In particular the planning for RE is rich and inspiring; the development of the skills of the newer members of the teaching staff are impressive and the RE knowledge evident in the pupils' responses demonstrate a true vision for the development of faith.
- The RE leadership team now need to embed the most effective approaches to teaching to ensure that consistent curriculum delivery is in place. This will be achieved through the influence of the many skilful teachers who act as role models for the developing staff team members.
- Given the low starting points of pupils entering the school, the levels of needs and the challenges faced due to social and emotional issues, the pupils make good progress over time and achieve very well.
- There are no significant differences in the achievement of particular groups or phases. Year on year pupils grow in knowledge of the Faith and improve their skills.
- Through assessment for learning the school is addressing any cohort specific achievement issues. For example, where the pace of progress in a particular year group has not been in line with other year groups, the leadership of the school has put in place targeted interventions delivered by teaching assistants.
- Moderation of standards within RE is consolidated by the collaborative working of RE leaders across the Romero MAC. These activities provide an additional and broader perspective on the standards that the pupils are achieving in RE.
- The pupils enjoy RE and they take particular pleasure in stories from the Gospels. They are moved to consider their own values in life by learning about the events in the life of Jesus.
- The teaching of RE is nothing less than good.

- The high quality teaching is brought about through teachers' thoughtful questioning, the well established routines for learning and the many inspired ideas that teachers use to engage the pupils.
- The children's work and development of skills are supported by an increasingly sophisticated dialogue in the teachers' marking, which provides opportunities for the pupils to reflect on the spiritual content of a lesson, as well as being prompted to enhance their thinking about faith.
- Teachers' expectations are high and as a result pupils' presentation in their writing and illustrations are impressive.
- Teachers ensure that all pupils can access learning and make progress in lessons by providing tasks which are differentiated to their needs and by using appropriate and vivid resources to engage the pupils.
- The pupils' grasp of learning intentions would be strengthened by teachers taking more time in lessons to explore pupils' ideas through wider discussion about faith.
- Team work in the classrooms is strong with teachers and teaching assistants working well together to support the pupils' development.
- Regular lesson observations and learning walks, conducted by senior staff, monitor the quality of teaching and serve as a catalyst for the promotion of improving provision.
- RE as a subject is prominent in the planned curriculum. It is given equal, if not greater status to the other core subjects of English and mathematics. The standards achieved in RE mirror the good results secured in English.
- The outstanding curriculum for RE is broad and inspiring.
- The curriculum is now rich with prayer, exploration of the liturgy and activities, which encourage detailed knowledge of the Bible. Spirituality may be found in the school's wider curriculum. For example, the school leaders are eager that the pupils become 'global citizens' and have an understanding of the wider world and the challenges and triumphs experienced by people across the globe.
- Furthermore, faith is brought alive through additional superb activities and resources. For example, the art teacher will help the pupils express their understanding of the Gospels by guiding pupils to reflect through a range of art media.
- The school has invested in establishing a '4D room' where pupils are taken to virtual environments to promote their intellectual and emotional responses to the world and spirituality.
- There is an important emphasis on debate in the RE curriculum; as a result, pupils are inquisitive, not afraid to ask searching questions and confident about exposing their views.
- During 'One World, Our World' week pupils learn about aspects of other world faiths, religions and beliefs, and the many cultures that form British society. As a result, they are curious about the world and respectful of all members of the diverse local and wider community.
- The recently redrafted family life policy provides a clear overview of how the school successfully delivers the 'All That I Am' relationships and sex education programme. Parents are informed of the content and it is clear that the school supports a meaningful dialogue about how the school and home share the responsibility for guiding the pupils.

- Pupils respond to the programme for sacramental preparation with reverence and sincerity. The key year group teachers work hard to guide the pupils on their journey towards the sacraments. Members of staff support the parents and parish in helping co-ordinate the programme. A small proportion of Catholic children do not receive the sacraments and the governors and staff are eager to encourage more families to engage with the celebration of the sacraments in the parish church.
- Religious education has a high profile in the communications that the school provides. The website is vivid and informative and illustrates the rich life of faith experienced by the children at Corpus Christi as they walk in the footsteps of Christ.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - teachers taking more time in lessons to explore pupils' ideas through wider discussion about faith
 - ensuring that consistent curriculum delivery is in place.
- Put in place formal systems for the governors to monitor Catholic life and collective worship.
- Broaden the pupils' understanding of vocation.
- Increase the amount of Corpus Christi pupils who receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation.
- Increase pupils' participation in collective worship by having a greater range of children from different age groups taking a lead in planning and delivering celebrations.