



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

ST EDMUND'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rosebery Street, Springhill, Birmingham B18 7PA

Inspection date	20 th & 21 st September 2017
Reporting Inspector	Rose Brookes
Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005	

Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	205
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Ms Maja Szeliga
Telephone number	0121 523 7274
E-mail address	enquiry@stedmund.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2012
DFE School Number	330 3347
Unique Reference Number	103440
Headteacher	Mary O'Friel
Previous inspection:	Good
This inspection:	Good

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



MAKING CHRIST KNOWN TODAY

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 three RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. These lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- 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 and the chair of the mission and strategy committee, the executive headteacher and the head of school, who is also the RE subject leader.
- The inspector attended a whole school assembly, a class prayer service and undertook a learning walk in all classes 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

- St Edmund's Catholic Primary School is one of two federated Catholic primary schools in the parish of St Patrick's in Birmingham. It shares a single executive headteacher and a governing body with St Patrick's Catholic Primary School. Each school has its own head of school. St Edmund's Catholic Primary School is a one form entry school with part-time nursery provision.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups and pupils with English as an additional language is significantly higher than the national average.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 36%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is significantly higher than the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is well above the national average.
- Attainment on entry is well below expected levels.
- Since the last inspection, a number of changes have taken place. A new assistant headteacher and a new phase leader have been appointed. There has been a high turnover of governors including a new chair of governors in June 2016. The school has also had a number of changes of parish priest. Another new parish priest has recently been appointed.

Main Findings

- St Edmund's Catholic Primary School is strongly led by the dynamic and faith-filled example of a very experienced executive headteacher. She is supported by a dedicated head of school who is also the RE subject leader. They are both totally committed to the Catholic mission of the school. They set very high standards for everyone to aspire to.
- St Edmund's Catholic Primary School is part of a two-school federation. It is also part of a larger group, Caritas Christi, comprising of twelve Catholic primary and two

Catholic secondary schools. St Edmund's Catholic Primary School works effectively with both of these groups to improve its Catholic life, worship and RE. This leads to the sharing of RE strategic planning, improved staff development, and networking support for RE subject leaders and class teachers.

- The governing body is outstanding in its commitment to the Catholic mission of the school. The RE leader ensures that they are systematically informed about all areas of Catholic life and RE. The governors' mission and strategy committee is very pro-active.
- The school strongly teaches Catholic virtues through a focus on faith, hope and love. Systematic school developmental planning has led to half termly theme based worship for all classes.
- Sacramental preparation Masses are celebrated jointly with St Patrick's Catholic Primary School. This liturgical worship, together with the parental and pupil catechesis, is an outstanding strength of this two-school federation.
- The school's teaching and learning about Catholic heritage is outstanding.

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 outstanding.
- Leaders promote the Catholic life of the school in the local community and within the school very effectively. The headteacher and governors share a strong commitment to the Catholicity of the school.
- The school has developed an excellent whole school annual Catholic history week. As a result, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the traditions and history of the Catholic Church and the significant role it has played in society.
- Year 6 have a good understanding about important historical events and characters in the development of modern Catholic Life. They have participated in a study of Guy Fawkes linked to a visit to Coughton Court and the history of the Throckmorton family.
- Year 3 have attended a retreat day at St Mary's Convent. This has enabled them to learn about the history of Catholicism and how it helped children and families to develop in faith. They also experienced the works of mercy which the convent still offers today.
- The school's behaviour policy is based on repentance and forgiveness. Classroom rules and contracts promote tolerance, mercy, love and kindness. This is seen in the consideration and respect that pupils show for themselves and others.
- Fundraising includes supporting CAFOD, Fr Hudson's, Macmillan Cancer, local food banks and a women's refuge.
- The school has a refugee week in which all staff, children and families are involved with researching, meeting and supporting refugees in Birmingham through contact made with St Chad's sanctuary. This year, the school intends to develop this and become a 'School of Sanctuary'.
- Staff are very committed to personally supporting any refugee families within the school community who are in need. They have donated vital supplies for newly arrived families who are in need. The refugee week enables all members of the school to support the local community and in doing so to live out the Gospel values.

- Each class has taken part in a very successful RE inspire workshop. During the workshops, parents are encouraged to pray and take part in religious activities with their children. Parents and pupils enjoy taking part in them. As a result, they are well attended.
- Collective worship is good with some outstanding features.
- There is a co-ordinated Gospel centred programme of whole school and class worship. This has been effectively developed around the virtues of faith, hope and love.
- Consistency in the provision of this virtues-based worship means that pupils take a leading role in planning worship. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils spoke with pride about how they had planned class and whole school worship.
- During the RE inspection, a whole school assembly focused on the ingredients for being a good friend. This focus was then reflected in class liturgies. The continuation of themes between whole school and class worship is a strength of the school. Pupils are continually taught how to form good relationships and how to be followers of Christ.
- The school is starting to embrace meditative prayer. Staff have received training for this. During the inspection Year 1 children were taught how to talk about the times when they have done something wrong. As a result of this prayer, the pupils have developed a culture of trust and a growing awareness of forgiveness. This now needs to be embedded across the school.
- Through questionnaires and learning walks with staff and governors, pupils regularly evaluate collective worship and Catholic life. The results show that they enjoy worship and they continually apply what they have learnt to their own lives.
- St Edmund's Catholic Primary School always ensures that the liturgical year is celebrated. There are daily dedicated whole school liturgies during Holy Week and Advent. Pupils benefit from taking a very active part in these liturgies.
- Whole school and class Masses are frequently celebrated. Sacramental preparation Masses are celebrated jointly with St Patrick's Catholic Primary School. This liturgical worship, together with the parental and pupil catechesis which happens after Mass, is an outstanding strength of this two-school federation. It gives parents and pupils the opportunity to return to the Mass within the context of the parish.
- Vocational development is not yet embedded into the Catholic life of the school. Pupils and staff need to develop their understanding of vocation in their own lives.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and Collective Worship

- The leadership of Catholic life and collective worship is good with some outstanding features.
- St Edmund's Catholic Primary School is strongly led by the dynamic and faith-filled example of a very experienced executive headteacher. She is supported by a dedicated and able head of school. They are both totally committed to the school and they set very high standards for everyone within the school family to aspire to.
- The school is part of a larger group called Caritas Christi, comprising of twelve Catholic primary and two Catholic secondary schools. Together the headteachers plan and share ideas about how they can develop the Catholic life of each school. Part of this planning includes an annual retreat day for newly qualified teachers. All

plans are implemented effectively and reviewed to evaluate the extent to which pupils benefit from them.

- School developmental planning for Catholic life and collective worship is systematic and strategic. It includes both schools in the federation. Currently, the school development plan is focused on giving all pupils the opportunity to plan, lead and evaluate class based collective worship. As a result, a growing number of pupils are able to speak with confidence about how they have led worship.
- Staff development is systematic and focused. Catholic life, RE and worship form part of staff performance management targets. These targets are clearly informed by the school development plan.
- Governors are actively informed about the monitoring of Catholic life and the delivery of collective worship through presentations by the RE subject leader at governing body meetings. Governors regularly evaluate the outcomes from and provision of Catholic life and collective worship. As a result, governors have a very accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development in regards to Catholic life and collective worship.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- The leadership, outcomes from and provision for RE are all good.
- The school is very well supported by the new parish priest who supports parish based sacramental first communion and confirmation programmes for both schools in the federation. This gives parents the opportunity to learn how to pray with their children.
- Teachers from both schools in the federation work together to moderate pupils' work in RE. Teachers from the same year groups, across the federation, also work closely together to share RE planning and resources. This has helped improve standards in RE.
- The RE curriculum is based on the diocesan scheme, '*Learning and Growing as the People of God,*' and follows its recommendations in terms of planning and assessment.
- The teaching of RE is good overall with some outstanding elements. However, there is also a minority of teaching that requires improvement. Senior leaders have accurately identified where teaching requires improvement and appropriate support has been provided.
- During the inspection, some outstanding questioning led to very good progress being made in demanding concepts such as the nature of temptation for Cain and Abel. Drama was also used well to enable all pupils to enjoy their RE.
- Pupils enter foundation stage with little or no understanding of RE. However, due to good teaching they quickly begin to make progress.
- The evidence from lesson observations and work scrutinies confirms the school's judgment that from Years 2 to 6 average attainment continues to be good for the majority and for about a third of pupils it is above expectations. In all year groups, boys perform less well than girls.

- The school needs to use data analysis to inform teachers' planning for all groups, but specifically for boys, to help close the gap in attainment and progress.
- The governors fulfil their statutory and canonical responsibilities regarding RE. They ensure that the requirements of the Bishops Conference are met in terms of curriculum time for RE and the priority that RE is given in the school. This is borne out by their pro-active role in monitoring standards in RE.
- The mission and strategy governors' committee have taken part in work scrutinies. From this monitoring a need to focus on the key learning objectives in the diocesan RE scheme was identified. This area for development was then included in the school development plan and specific staff training is scheduled to be provided.
- The school ensures that all pupils are aware of other faiths. Pupils are respectful of other faiths during lessons and visits to places of worship.
- The teaching of relationships and sex education is taught in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- Ensure pupils and staff have a clear understanding of vocational development.
- Use data analysis to inform teachers' planning for all groups, but specifically for boys, to help close the gap in attainment and progress.
- Focus all teaching on the key learning objectives from the diocesan RE scheme.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to plan and lead collective worship.