



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## Section 48 Inspection Report

### ST ANDREW'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Part of the Our Lady and All Saints Catholic Multi Academy Company  
Windrush Close, Olton, Solihull, B92 8QL

Inspection dates:

14-15 June 2022

Lead Inspector:

Ben McArdle

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#### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:

**Good**

Catholic Life:

Outstanding

Religious Education:

Good

Collective Worship:

Good

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*Overall effectiveness at previous inspection:*

*Requires Improvement*

#### SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is a Good Catholic school because:

- Considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection.
- Pupils value its Catholic Life and actively promote it.
- There is a strong sense of community at all levels, evident in the way all stakeholders passionately articulate the mission statement and live it out.
- Pupils and staff have a secure understanding of the Church's liturgical year and carefully craft prayer and liturgy around it.
- Staff have a loving and nurturing approach, resulting in happy, confident, and secure pupils.

It is not yet Outstanding because:

- The impact of actions undertaken due to monitoring and evaluation isn't systematically tracked in a way that supports staff to make rapid developments.
- Although constantly at least good, standards in teaching Religious Education are inconsistent.
- Feedback routines in Religious Education are not yet embedded deeply enough to consistently enable pupils to make progress, due to comments in some classes focusing on grammatical and secretarial errors.
- Pupils do not have well-developed knowledge and understanding of other religions and faiths.

**FULL REPORT****What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Systematically track the impact of actions arising from the already rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures so that further improvements to Catholic Life, Religious Education & Collective Worship continue to be made rapidly.
- Establish consistency in the quality of teaching in Religious Education.
- Embed a feedback system that consistently enables pupils to respond in a systematic and planned way, ensuring they understand what they need to do to improve.
- Improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of other religions and faiths.

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>The quality of the Catholic Life of the school</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	Good
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	Outstanding

**CL1 The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school****CL2 The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school**

- The mission statement, *'Live, love, and learn together as witnesses for Christ'*, summarises the educational mission of the Church. Not only is it well known by pupils, staff, and parents, it is deeply embedded into the very fabric of the school. Because it is frequently and confidently referred to in various contexts, pupils are empowered to establish links between the mission and their lives.
- Staff are also committed to the mission. They contribute to it, for example, by being part of leaders' consultation on it and by weaving it into the language they use each day with pupils. Because they engage with the continuing professional development (CPD) programme, staff are united in the way they promote the headteacher's vision for the school.
- Pupils evaluate the school's Catholic Life through pupil voice activities, including questionnaires. Their views are considered when leaders plan developments because responses are synthesised into key action points. Pupils are now ready for the next step in developing their leadership skills by being enabled to take the lead in planning school improvements.
- Because pupils understand the need to respect one another, their behaviour is excellent; pupils seek out opportunities to be 'witnesses for Christ' whenever possible. For example, the growing in faith together (GIFT) ambassadors told inspectors how they regularly survey the playground and field to ensure that nobody is lonely during breaktimes – if they see somebody on their own, they go and play with them.

- Due to the emphasis placed on the school's mission and the prominence of the Faith throughout school, pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands that membership of this Catholic school brings. The GIFT ambassadors and Faith Buddies are committed to their roles, which make a real difference to pupils' school experience. Parents told inspectors of the legacy impact the Faith Buddy system has on their children, who are now in secondary school, where buddies are still friends, long after they have left St Andrew's.
- The school is supported well by a conscientious parish priest, who prioritises the weekly celebration of Mass for the whole school community, including parents and parishioners. He is a regular visitor to classrooms, and as such, he contributes well to their spiritual and moral development. Furthermore, he is an avid supporter of the divine renovation ministry, the impact of which is demonstrated by the number of baptisms he has conducted within the school community since his appointment eighteen months ago.
- The parish priest also has plans to further pursue his ministry of divine renovation by contributing towards staff formation with the Sycamore programme.
- As a result of using the Life to the Full curriculum for relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE), pupils have a growing understanding of loving relationships within a Christian context and can talk about how to deal with stress, pressure, and cyberbullying. The RSHE curriculum needs to become more embedded for this understanding to deepen.
- Vocation is understood by pupils as a calling from God, 'now and in the future', and they can offer examples of ordained, religious, and lay vocations. Some pupils can speak about vocation more widely in terms of using their God-given gifts and talents to serve Him by helping others; they also use the school's mission statement to reinforce the concept.
- Pupils are exceptionally proud of their school and enjoy its role in the parish and local communities. This is because of the good relationship the school has with the parish; for example, the 'prayer partners' initiative, whereby parishioners pray for a named child, whom they have met when the children visit the church, and joint services of reconciliation for parishioners and pupils. There are numerous examples of collaboration with the local community; for example, pupils send Christmas cards to the local community and paint pebbles with holy messages on them, which are distributed to local residents.
- There is a palpable sense of community within the school. All stakeholders are unanimous in speaking of the high-quality relationships between them and the reason for it; one staff member told inspectors, 'We are the family of God'. Consequently, St Andrew's is a happy and supportive school.
- The physical environment is mainly of very high quality, particularly in communal areas. Prayer areas in classrooms are liturgically correct and prominent; their high quality is consistent throughout the school. Dedications to class saints are also apparent, and pupils can discuss who they are and why they are special. There is variance in the presentation of the Catholic School Pupil Profile (CSPP) values across the school; some are good, whilst others lack care and a sense of pride. Nevertheless, pupils can articulate their knowledge of the values well and appreciate how they are celebrated in weekly 'Dove' assemblies.
- All staff are excellent role models. This is because of their secure understanding of the school's mission to be 'witnesses to Christ'. Staff care sincerely for their pupils and consistently demonstrate the school's high expectations surrounding behaviour.
- The 'Enjoying our Faith' books showcase the work undertaken by each class to promote the school's Catholic Life and actively engage pupils in it. These books are presented beautifully, which is a testament to the high regard and importance staff

place on the ethos of the school and a great way to celebrate the school's work in this area.

- Elements of Catholic social teachings have been developed across the school and incorporated into the more comprehensive curriculum, such as a topic making links between the failed first mission of Scott of the Antarctic and the dignity of the human person. This forms a good strategy for further promoting pupils' moral development. However, these links are not always explicit or fully explored with pupils. More explicit references to Catholic social teachings need to be further developed and embedded throughout the school and supported with CPD for teachers so that pupils can explicitly articulate how the Pope's writings complement what they learn in the wider curriculum.
- Chaplaincy is effective in supporting Catholic Life and in contributing to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. The GIFT ambassadors undertake much work and are exceptionally well supported by the link governor; they monitor aspects of Catholic Life, lead prayer amongst their peers, and undertake outreach work. To be truly outstanding, the GIFT ambassadors must be given the independence to select the charities and projects they wish to support and implement their ideas. Ambassadors told inspectors they want more opportunities to inspire younger children in Year 1 and Reception to become GIFT ambassadors in the future, in the same way they have recently encouraged some Year 2 pupils to join.
- Furthermore, there are extensive opportunities to develop pupils' spirituality and morality. Retreats hosted by One Life, joint ventures with St Peter's Catholic School, and awareness-raising projects, such as CAFOD's 'Step up to the plate' campaign, together with valued contributions from the parish priest, all make a significant contribution towards this. The school is currently trialling the use of 'child-only books' in Y2, so pupils can record their reflections on what they learn in all their subjects.
- Pastoral care is outstanding. Clear policies and structures demonstrate the school's commitment to everyone's welfare, particularly the vulnerable. Almost half of the pupil leaders for Catholic Life are made up of this group; they benefit enormously from their inclusion.
- The school is equally attentive to the needs of staff. The staff especially appreciate the headteacher's efforts to be mindful of their well-being and his care regarding their work-life balance; for example, he never sends email communications outside of working hours.
- The school is compliant with its provision of RSHE. Communication with parents regarding this is good; they feel well-informed about what their children learn.

### **CL3 How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school**

- All leaders are deeply committed to the school's Catholic Life. Their rigorous monitoring demonstrates this and the priority this takes amongst their workload, leaders' concise articulation of the mission by leaders at all levels, and the formation of the Catholic education team (CET).
- Catholic Life is monitored extensively, which is subsequently followed up by further monitoring. However, it is not always clear how the actions were undertaken by leaders, as a result of their monitoring, impact school developments. Leaders must determine this before the next round of scheduled monitoring to guarantee rapid, precise progress is made towards development targets at all times.
- Improvement plans are strategically written, resulting in a sustained upwards trajectory of improvement throughout the school. These plans are supported by

CPD, which further develops the staff's understanding of what it means to work in a Catholic school. Consequently, staff are involved in shaping and supporting Catholic Life.

- Despite several significant unforeseen staffing challenges, leaders have effectively supported staff to make considerable improvements to the quality of Catholic Life in the school. All staff are commended the rapid progress they have made for the benefit of the pupils.
- The school's engagement with parents is excellent. Parents are engaged with school life and subsequently made to feel valued as community members. Leaders listen to parents, who told inspectors that the headteacher is 'extremely responsive; there is an open-door policy, and no query is left unanswered.' There are many means of communication with parents, which is particularly valued by those parents who work full-time, who would otherwise find it difficult to engage so actively in school life. As a result, parents thoroughly understand the school's mission and are highly supportive of it.
- Governors have an in-depth understanding of the school's Catholic Life and have high aspirations for its continued development. They hold leaders to account, ensuring that progress towards securing their vision to make St Andrew's an outstanding Catholic school is continuously made. In particular, the governors have worked hard to stabilise staffing to ensure the children receive a high-quality Catholic education.
- The school responds well to diocesan initiatives and promotes the vision of the Archbishop of Birmingham throughout the school. Tentative plans have been made, for example, in response to the synodal exercise currently being undertaken throughout the country.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of Religious Education	Good
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	Good
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	Good
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	Good

### **RE1 How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education**

### **RE2 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education**

- The majority of pupils are making expected progress in Religious Education. In comparison, boys and girls make similar progress. However, the picture for disadvantaged pupils, those for whom English is an additional language (EAL), and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is more varied. This has been recognised by leaders, who focus on ensuring that teachers' expectations reflect diocesan requirements.
- Pupils speak confidently of what they have learnt. Because work units are covered well by teachers, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of what they're

studying. Most pupils can discuss the link between religious beliefs and their life experiences.

- Through Kagan-structured learning, pupils are actively engaged in lessons. This further helps to develop their ability to know more and remember more through collaborative work, dialogue, and activities.
- Because of a recent whole school focus, teachers use various strategies for learning in Religious Education; consequently, pupils' behaviour is almost always good. They demonstrate good attitudes for learning.
- Attainment in Religious Education is good. It is at least in line with attainment in the other core subjects; there has been a sustained improvement over recent years.
- There is high productivity in the vast majority of pupils' exercise books. Written work is of a good standard because pupils have many opportunities to write in Religious Education lessons, including extended pieces. Standards of presentation are good, on the whole.
- Consistently, effectively planned lessons mean that teachers are aware of their pupils' achievements, resulting in lessons which build upon their prior learning well.
- Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and impart this to the children. Consequently, pupils can apply this knowledge in lessons over some time to make progress.
- Because of Kagan's cooperative learning strategies, pupils work collaboratively, generating good motivation and enthusiasm in lessons.
- Time is managed well by teachers most of the time. Occasionally, too much time is spent by the teacher talking, resulting in low-level disruptive behaviours emulating from pupils and a slow start to independent learning.
- Teachers ask questions to check knowledge, consolidate learning and sometimes require pupils to justify their responses and use higher-order thinking skills. However, the ablest pupils are often not challenged to deepen their knowledge and understanding quickly enough.
- Support staff are effectively deployed in all classrooms to optimise learning for pupils, notably lower ability pupils and those with SEND. Planning is shared with them in advance of lessons so that they know the intended outcomes of each lesson and can determine the best way to support the teacher in achieving these. For example, in one class, during the inspection, a teaching assistant role played Jesus on the Road to Emmaus to bring the passage to life and help pupils remember the details.
- The Bible is used exceptionally well in Religious Education lessons. Pupils are confident in using it to locate scripture, and they treat the Word of God with reverence and respect when physically handling it. This is directly due to teachers communicating high expectations within the school.
- There is some good practice when teachers give feedback in Religious Education. At its best, it helps pupils identify how they need to improve and allows them to reflect on how the theological and moral messages they have learnt can be applied to their lives (Attainment Target 2). However, this practice is inconsistent across the school because, in some classes, feedback focuses on grammatical and secretarial skills at the expense of Religious Education.
- Celebration of achievement and effort is central to teachers' assessment strategy; they use the rewards system effectively to celebrate pupils' achievements in Religious Education. Because this is held in high regard by pupils, the use of rewards is motivational to them.



**RE3 How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Religious Education**

- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, in terms of the amount of curriculum time devoted to it, and of the Archbishop of Birmingham, by teaching the prescribed programme of study and distributing the teaching of the subject throughout the week.
- Religious Education has full parity with the other core subjects.
- Frequent monitoring, which actively involves the local governing body, enables leaders to know the standard of learning in all classrooms and accurately identify areas for development. The analysis of leaders' findings needs to be developed so that it has a positive impact on all teachers' pedagogical development.
- The CET work together to lead the subject. They have a clear vision for Religious Education at St Andrew's and take steps to achieve this. Using their expertise, teaching and learning are developed so that all lessons are at least good.
- Leaders have recently focussed on developing the teaching of Religious Education for all groups of pupils, including the range of tasks given to pupils. More able learners need to be consistently challenged sooner, and pupils with SEND need more effective scaffolding to successfully access the curriculum and make the same amount of progress as other groups of learners.
- The multi-academy company (MAC) engages one of its experts to validate the school's self-evaluation judgements; this formulates the basis of discussion of the judgements with senior leaders. In this way, the MAC ensures that judgements made are accurate. Furthermore, the MAC has established a subject leaders' group, which works together coherently to inform and share good practices.

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

<b>The quality of Collective Worship</b>	<b>Good</b>
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	Good
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	Good
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	Good

**CW1 How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship****CW2 The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

- Pupils display very high levels of reverence during prayer and liturgy. This is because of the school's high expectations and embedded routines.
- Pupils prepare and lead worship regularly in a variety of contexts. As a result, they know what makes for conducive prayer.
- Greater independence in designing and delivering their acts of worship is now needed to enable pupils to flourish. Opportunities for independence should be made

available to the younger pupils in the school, whom the GIFT ambassadors recognise as being ready to take this step.

- Approaches to prayer used with pupils include different types of singing and the use of scripture, reflection, and petitions. Because of this, most pupils know there are many ways they can speak to God, in word and action.
- Pupils sing joyfully and with confidence. At a Mass celebrated during the inspection, which Year 3 pupils led, the singing was lifted to a higher level when the pupils started singing in rounds and in harmony.
- Pupils' knowledge of the Church's liturgical year is excellent. They confidently articulate the key seasons and feasts of the Church and how these impact the school's work. This is particularly evident with pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils benefit from working in this community of prayer. They appreciate the time they are given to talk to God and do so with pride. Because of the care with which worship is planned at St Andrew's, prayer positively impacts the spiritual and moral development of many pupils.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school; there are many opportunities to pray each day, which all pupils and staff appreciate.
- Themes for prayer are often clear and are communicated well to pupils. Where this is less effective, pupils are confused by some of the language and analogies used by teachers, and this prevents them from identifying what their prayers are being guided to be about.
- Prayer is central to the school community. Throughout the pandemic, the CET recorded mission assemblies which were broadcast virtually, enabling all stakeholders to pray together. One parent described prayer as 'the DNA of the school.'
- Staff have a good knowledge of the Church's liturgical year and use it to benefit the children in their care. However, in some classrooms, the provision for the seasons and feasts of the Church goes little beyond liturgical colours and does not always influence the prayers being offered.
- There is a clear structure for pupil-led worship at St Andrew's, and classroom staff are skilled in facilitating their leadership in these settings. Pupils are frequently supported in writing prayers for larger settings; whilst it would be prudent for leaders to have oversight of pupils' prayers in these settings, pupils express a desire for a greater degree of independence when leading celebrations, such as Mass.
- In classrooms, prayer is frequently punctuated with verbal question-answer sessions. To ensure that worship allows for the spiritual raising of the heart and mind to God, teachers must not check pupils' understanding during prayer but allow personal reflection instead.
- There are clear routines and expectations established within the school for prayer; for example, when the Bible is read from as part of Collective Worship, an acclamation is sung, and two pupils act as acolytes, framing flanking God's word with candles. However, these expectations are not always adhered to in all classrooms.
- The school is outstanding in the way it engages other adults associated with the school in prayer. These opportunities are treasured by those who attend, who are elated now that Covid restrictions have ended, enabling them to join with the school in worship on site.



### **CW3 How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship**

- Leaders know how to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. They model good standards to the pupils and staff, who seek to replicate the same quality of prayer in their classrooms.
- Prayer is made accessible in a contemporary context. Through a variety of music, visual aids and explanations, most pupils are engaged in the opportunities they are presented with. Some pupils seek further variety in how prayer is facilitated, such as joyful reflections and additional opportunities for spontaneous and practical forms of worship, such as the 'star prayers' observed by inspectors.
- There is a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to lead prayer, which leaders promote. In assembly, Mass, in their classroom, or that of a peer, outside in the prayer garden, or at the parish church, pupils enjoy and benefit from leading services. The link governor plays a central role in facilitating these.
- Collective Worship forms part of the CPD offering of the school and contributes to a large degree of consistency throughout the school.
- St Andrew's embraces and implements the requirements of the Archbishop of Birmingham surrounding prayer and liturgy.

### **SCHOOL DETAILS**

Unique reference number	148086
Local authority	Solihull
<i>This inspection was carried out under Canon 806 of Canon Law and under Section 48 of the Education Act (2005).</i>	
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	236
Appropriate authority	The board of directors
Chair	Paul Gray
Headteacher	Kevin Kelly
Telephone number	0121 743 5675
Website address	<a href="https://www.st-andrews.solihull.sch.uk">https://www.st-andrews.solihull.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@st-andrews.solihull.sch.uk">office@st-andrews.solihull.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	June 2017

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL**

- St Andrew's is a slightly smaller than average primary school located in Olton. The school serves the parish of St Thomas More, Sheldon.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 96.2%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The percentage of SEND pupils is broadly in line with the national average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins is below the national average.

- The percentage of pupils with EAL is below the national average.
- Attainment on entry is close to national levels.
- There have been several significant changes since the last inspection: the school has academised and joined the Our Lady and All Saints Catholic MAC; a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed and assumed responsibility for the leadership of Religious Education; almost all of the governing body are new to post, and the parish has welcomed a new priest.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THIS INSPECTION**

- Two Diocesan inspectors carried out the inspection: Ben McArdle & Paul Madia. Furthermore, Jane McNally shadowed the inspectors over the two days.
- The focus of the inspection was on the impact, quality, and leadership of the school's provision of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- The inspectors observed teaching across five Religious Education lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors completed work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic Life, the impact of Religious Education teaching on their learning over time and their experience of Collective Worship.
- Meetings were held with governors, including the link governor and representatives from the MAC, the headteacher, the Catholic education team, the RSHE lead, groups of pupils, parents, the parish priest, and parishioners.
- The inspectors attended a whole school Mass, whole school and class-based Collective Worship. They undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching in Religious Education, the presentation of the Catholic Life of the school and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors reviewed various documents, including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, Analyse School Performance (ASP) data, the school development plan, the Catholic Life and Religious Education action plans, teachers' planning and the 'Enjoying Our Faith' books.