



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection Report

ST DUNSTAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Drayton Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7LP

Inspection dates:

29-30 March 2022

Lead Inspector:

Ben McArdle

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:

Good

Catholic Life:

Outstanding

Religious Education:

Good

Collective Worship:

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection:

Outstanding

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is a Good Catholic school because:

- Catholic Life is the beating heart of school life. The top priority of the inspirational, faith-filled headteacher is to enable all pupils to experience Catholic social teaching as a lived reality.
- All stakeholders have a clear understanding of the school's mission, are fully committed to it, and actively contribute towards fulfilling it.
- The entire curriculum is cohesively designed to enable pupils to go forth and build the Kingdom.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge, enabling them to confidently teach Religious Education and competently answer pupils' questions.
- The provision of prayer and liturgy is deeply valued by all members of the community.

It is not yet Outstanding because:

- Pupils need to be given the opportunity to lead some aspects of school improvement relating to Catholic Life.
- The slow pace of most Religious Education lessons limits the achievements of more able pupils.
- Assessment of Religious Education does not always accurately capture the attainment of lower ability pupils.
- Opportunities for Collective Worship that is planned and led by pupils need to become more deeply embedded.

FULL REPORT

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Systemically involve more pupils in the evaluation of Catholic Life so that they are routinely involved in planning improvements to it.
- Increase the pace of Religious Education lessons so that pupils have more time to demonstrate their achievements, particularly more able pupils.
- Develop creative assessment opportunities in Religious Education so that lower ability pupils are able to demonstrate their full understanding of the topics taught.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to plan and lead Collective Worship.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school	Outstanding
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	Outstanding
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 school's mission statement, *'as we grow with God, we learn from each other'*, is universally cherished by all. The entire school community is restless in its pursuit of building the Kingdom of God in the local area by aspiring to be authentic disciples of Jesus Christ.
- All areas of the curriculum are designed to reflect the school's vision and the staff are experts in its implementation. For example, teachers use texts in English that reflect 'Building the Kingdom' themes so that the values pupils learn in the school's pastoral work are reinforced in its academic work. Consequently, all pupils are fully aware of the demands and responsibilities of being part of a Catholic community.
- Some pupils are involved in evaluating the Catholic Life of the school to ensure that the school's incredibly high expectations are being met. For example, the chaplaincy team monitor the prayer focus areas in classrooms and suggest improvements to be made, where necessary. Pupils also provide feedback to leaders through questionnaires, but they are not yet part of leading improvements that arise from them.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Their secure understanding of the dignity of the human person, instilled within them by a wide range of outstanding initiatives, means that pupils consciously seek opportunities to treat one another with compassion at all times.
- There is an incredibly strong sense of community at St Dunstan's, in which everybody thrives. Because pupils fully understand the demands of belonging to a Catholic school community, they show an outstanding ability to listen to each other and praise their peers. They are quick to forgive and ask to be forgiven when things

go wrong because of the focus on the teachings of Jesus that underpin all areas of the school's work.

- Pupils embrace the opportunity to engage with the Catholic Life of the school in practical ways that impact society. Be it through prayer and liturgy, community outreach work or lobbying their MP, pupils thrive when given the responsibility to make a difference in the world.
- Activities related to the 'schools of sanctuary' programme and the school's 'rights respecting' status resonate particularly strongly with all members of the community. The school is also engaging with CAFOD's 'Live Simply' project. As a result, pupils' moral, and ethical development is outstanding; they actively seek justice in society through action and prayer.
- Furthermore, St Dunstan's is the only school in the local authority to have been invited to speak at the Birmingham Migration Forum. This invitation was a direct result of the pupils' passion to make the world a better and safer place for all, out of their respect for the dignity of the human person and their commitment to the common good.
- The school's chaplaincy work is very good. Pupils experience residential retreats in the year groups that receive sacraments of initiation and all pupils experience retreats provided by One Life. This provision is reinforced by prayer services in school and opportunities to engage with the parish on a weekly basis. Consequently, pupils' spirituality is well-nurtured and is a central part to the school's provision of Catholic education.
- The provision of pastoral care offered by St Dunstan's is outstanding. Pupils and parents are deeply appreciative of the many initiatives led primarily by the parent link worker, who is restless in her ambition to support families. Through her work with social services, local food banks and sourcing emergency accommodation, as well as aspiring to improve attendance, she powerfully demonstrates the Gospel values that are at the core of the school's work. As a result, parents unanimously speak highly of the impact of her work.
- All pupils are acutely aware of their vocational development; they know it's a calling from God to which they are invited to respond. A special 'vocations week' helps pupils to see a variety of responses to this call. The school works hard to ensure religious, ordained and lay vocations are showcased to pupils, including from people belonging to other religions and faiths. To be truly outstanding in this area, pupils' awareness needs to be drawn to marriage and single life as further responses to God's call.
- There are good links with the parish. Parishioners regularly visit school to provide musical accompaniment to prayer and liturgy and to pray the Rosary with pupils. Furthermore, there are weekly opportunities for pupils to join the parish for Mass. The school's prayer garden was created and furnished by parishioners. All of these opportunities are regarded well by pupils. Pupils desire to share their contemporary prayers and hymns with the parish.
- Staff are wholeheartedly committed to living out the mission of the school. Pupils respond well to their inspiring witness.
- All staff are excellent role models to pupils. They model appropriate behaviours, founded on Gospel values, which pupils aspire to replicate in their own attitudes and behaviours.
- The school site is filled with physical signs of its identity and mission. Displays match the liturgical seasons of the Church, communicate messages from the Pope and celebrate pupils' work in the Catholic Life of the school. For example, permanent professional displays acknowledge and celebrate sites of Catholic pilgrimage, whilst high-quality temporary displays provide inspirational papal quotes

for pupils to reflect on during Lent. Consequently, pupils are exposed to the universal dimension of the Catholic Church.

- The commitment of staff to the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. They are united in their drive to provide the very best Catholic education, as demonstrated by their membership of the newly formed spirituality committee. They are equally committed to their own formation and development, as demonstrated by their participation in a forthcoming staff pilgrimage to Rome. As one staff member told inspectors, 'The Gospel values underpin everything we do; we reflect on them daily through the way we treat one another. We live them. They are uplifting.'
- High quality pastoral care is also afforded to the staff. They particularly value the support provided by the assistant headteacher and headteacher, who were both described as 'incredibly approachable'. One member of staff spoke passionately about the amazing kindness shown by the headteacher during a period of illness.
- Relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) is meticulously planned using TenTen's 'Live Life to the Full' programme to ensure that big questions are asked at the start of each half-term. For example, when studying the dignity of the human person, pupils reflect on the questions '*How can we maintain our faith in God, even in the face of adversity?*', '*How can we show people that God created us equally?*' and '*How do we show respect for ourselves and others through our faith in God?*' As a result, pupils' learning is consistently framed within the Good News of Jesus Christ and know that this makes their learning more purposeful.

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

- Senior leaders' commitment to the Catholic Life of the school is steadfast. They lead all developments in school and are the catalysts for the school's drive to be advocates to those in need in the local community.
- Catholic Life is regarded as the primary leadership responsibility by leaders and governors.
- Monitoring and evaluation of Catholic Life is comprehensive and carefully planned. As a result of rigorous and consistent monitoring, involving a range of activities, leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and the areas it wishes to further develop. Impressive is the way in which leaders consistently share their evaluation, which enables all stakeholders to remain fully informed at all times.
- Because evaluation is accurate and well-shared, school improvement relating to Catholic Life is appropriately targeted and rapid.
- Continuing professional development (CPD) relating to Catholic Life is regular, considerably planned, and effective. Of particular note is the opportunities provided in relation to 'Building the Kingdom', which successfully drives the entire curriculum, and the sacramental preparation training provided by the Archdiocese of Birmingham, for relevant staff.
- New staff are inducted into the Catholic Life of the school well. Clear expectations are set out in a supportive way, with internal CPD supported by diocesan training and visits to other schools, which enable new staff to accurately ascertain the vision of St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School.
- The views of parents are regularly sought, and the school is active in its engagement with them. The headteacher and parent link worker are highly visible in the morning so that parents can speak to them. Governors and the headteacher ensure that a translator is readily available to assist with effective, immediate communication.

- Because governors are well-informed of Catholic Life developments, they are able to offer effective support and challenge to school leaders which ensures continual school improvement in this area. They discharge their duties effectively.
- The school responds well when asked to implement the decisions of the Archbishop of Birmingham in relation to Catholic Life. Governors are aware of the instruction from His Grace regarding academisation and are working towards achieving this.

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

- Pupils make good overall progress in Religious Education. Whole school progress is healthy and stable.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve better in Religious Education than they do in other core subjects. Data for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) is significantly lower than for other groups of pupils, though their verbal responses are stronger than those given in written tasks. Creative methods of assessing lower ability and pupils with SEND need to be developed so that teachers assess and report their achievements accurately.
- Because of teachers' careful planning and use of questions, all pupils are encouraged to reflect and think theologically and ethically. Pupils have a heightened awareness of how religious teachings impact their lives in the way they are manifested in their behaviours and attitudes.
- Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons. They describe them as 'fun and interactive' and they appreciate the different activities they are given by their teachers. As a result, they are well-motivated and eager to learn; behaviour in lessons is very good.
- The quality of work produced in exercise books is very good. All pupils, regardless of their ability, are supported to produce high quality written work. Because pupils have great respect for the subject, they take great pride in their work, which is almost always presented beautifully.
- Attainment in Religious Education is good overall and compares favourably against pupils' attainment in other core subjects.
- Teachers consistently plan lessons which meet the needs of most pupils, resulting in teaching that is mainly good. Teachers assess pupils during lessons and usually adapt tasks and explanations to ensure most pupils are making progress. However, teachers do not plan sufficiently to maximise the learning of more able pupils.
- Teachers demonstrate expert subject knowledge. Because of their thorough preparation for lessons, utilising the support offered by leaders, all staff provide

clear explanations of the Church's teachings and competently answer pupils' questions.

- A range of teaching strategies is used by all staff in Religious Education lessons. Most strategies result in written work, which is frequently a type of extended writing. Teachers need to develop effective and efficient ways of capturing more creative learning.
- When learning activities result in pupils completing a piece of extended writing, teachers sometimes prioritise the development of literacy skills over the Religious Education being taught.
- Teachers use unit markers to involve pupils in evaluating their learning, though they are not always completed with the youngest pupils. As a result, pupils know how their knowledge has been developed as a result of good teaching.
- Many teachers do not use time efficiently in lessons. This is because too much time is spent with pupils sitting on the carpet listening at the start of lessons, or because teachers model tasks to the pupils too much. The pace of learning needs to increase in general so that all pupils, but particularly the more able, are given sufficient opportunity to demonstrate their achievements against the learning objectives independently.
- Elements of the school's Catholic Life work, particularly relating to Feast Days and Remembrance Sunday, interrupt units of work in Religious Education from time to time. Consequently, the coverage of some units is not detailed enough.
- Teachers use questioning well to probe pupils' answers in class so that they answer with appropriate depth. This further develops their ability to think theologically, ethically, and morally. More targeted questioning of more able pupils is needed across the school so that they are enabled to demonstrate their achievements of the more challenging learning objectives for each unit of work.
- High expectations are always communicated in Religious Education by all staff.
- Good quality resources are used in lessons, which promote learning. Other adults support pupils effectively. In the best examples, teaching assistants adapt and rephrase learning so that lower ability pupils make as much progress as their peers.
- Teachers plan for visits to places of worship as part of their teaching of other religions and faiths. These visits enhance the learning that occurs and pupils hold these opportunities in high regard.
- Teachers' feedback frequently enables pupils to make progress, though there is inconsistency on how the feedback policy is implemented. In the best examples, teachers pose questions that deepen pupils thinking and challenges them to achieve the more demanding learning objectives identified by the unit of work. At worst, feedback sometimes focusses on literacy at the expense of Religious Education.

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

- Religious Education fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, and the additional requirements of the Archbishop of Birmingham.
- Leaders and governors generously ensure that more than 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education.
- Governors prioritise the budget for Religious Education over that for any other subject.
- Effective CPD is provided to staff, which meets the needs of the school. Consequently, standards in Religious Education remain high. Informal one-to-one support is provided to members of staff as and when it is needed. This is thoroughly appreciated by all and, in particular, Early Career Teachers.

- Leaders and governors monitor and evaluate Religious Education well. Focus now needs to be placed on the attainment and progress of significant groups of pupils.
- The subject leader for Religious Education has a clear vision for teaching and learning and a good level of expertise in securing this vision under the direction of the headteacher.
- Religious Education effectively meets the needs of the pupils, as a result they remain actively engaged learners.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality of Collective Worship	Good
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 are always reverent during prayer and liturgy. This is because of the high expectations that are consistently modelled by all staff. Consequently, pupils know how to behave when praying and always demonstrate respect.
- Pupils sing joyfully and with enthusiasm as they understand the importance of doing so. One pupil, when speaking to inspectors about singing, quoted St Augustine saying, 'He who sings prays twice.' Musical accompaniment is regularly provided by a parishioner.
- There are opportunities for pupils to plan and lead acts of Collective Worship throughout the school. Prayer planned for the whole school or for phases are considerably planned and effective in engaging other pupils. This is because leaders support the pupils in their planning. Within individual classrooms, there is inconsistency in the way that pupils plan and lead prayer. Leaders are aware of this and have already planned to address it.
- Pupils are aware of the provisions the school makes for prayer; they find it easy to pray at St Dunstan's because of the climate that has been established by staff. One pupil commented 'You can pray at any time'.
- Pupils describe prayer as 'relaxing', though some experience anxiety in case they get a question wrong during prayer. To avoid this, the school must ensure that the focus on prayer is an authentic raising of the heart and mind to God and avoid question-answer sessions during acts of Collective Worship.
- As a result of its prominence throughout the school and the way that Collective Worship is planned, pupils have a good understanding of the Church's key seasons and feasts and they competently use technical vocabulary to express it.
- Spiritual development is a key focus of prayer, this is because pupils are always challenged to 'go forth' and use prayer to make a difference in the world.

Consequently, pupils and parents are invigorated by the school's provision of Collective Worship.

- Pupils enjoy reading in Mass but would like more opportunities to lead and evaluate prayer in classrooms and other places. This is an area of work that the chaplaincy team are eager to lead.
- Because whole school and phase acts of worship are carefully planned, prayer in these circumstances always has a clear theme, message, and direction. There is currently no system in classrooms that enables pupil-led prayer to achieve this high standard also; this has already been identified by leaders and with an accompanying development plan in place.

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

- Leaders know how to plan and deliver good quality Collective Worship. As a result, excellent routines have been established at whole school level.
- Because leaders have an extensive knowledge of the liturgical calendar of the Church, all stakeholders are engaged in meaningful opportunities for prayer.
- In the relatively short time that the headteacher has been in post, huge improvements have been made in school. He has rightly prioritised the Catholic Life of the school as his first focus for school development. He has plans in place, which are supported by senior leaders and the governing body, to develop pupils' leadership of prayer. Time is needed to action and embed these plans.
- Excellent provision is made for the prayer life of staff. The provision of daily staff prayer, coupled with retreat and pilgrimage opportunities, helps to ensure that their commitment to the Catholic education of their pupils remains steadfast.
- Collective Worship features as part of the school's self-evaluation processes, and governors accurately know the strengths and areas for development in this area. When governors attend prayer and liturgy in school, they must take care to ensure that there are no missed opportunities to contribute towards its evaluation.
- St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School fully meets the additional requirements of the Archbishop of Birmingham in relation to prayer and liturgy.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	103455
Local authority	Birmingham
<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	Voluntary Aided
Age range	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	389
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gillian Gregory (acting)
Headteacher	Matthew Tehan
Telephone number	0121 464 4648
Website address	www.stdunstans.bham.sch.uk
Email address	enquiry@stdunstans.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2015

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- St Dunstan's is a larger than average Catholic primary school located in South Birmingham, serving the parish of St Dunstan's, Kings Heath.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 57.6%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The percentage of SEND pupils is above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins is above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with EAL is above the national average.
- Attainment on entry is average.
- Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed and the chair of governors has resigned.

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors: Ben McArdle and Michelle Walsh.
- 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 twelve Religious Education lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors completed a 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, the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff, parish curate, parents, pupils, the home link

worker, and the director of the Catholic Primary Partnership. A telephone conversation was held with the parish priest before the start of the inspection.

- The inspectors attended a whole school assembly, phase Collective Worship, two instances of staff prayer and 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 a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, Analyse School Performance (ASP) data, the school development plan, the RE action plan, teachers' planning and governors' documentation.