



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection Report

ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Blue Lane East, Walsall, WS2 8HN

Inspection dates:

6-7 December 2021

Lead Inspector:

Louise Bury

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:

Good

Catholic Life:

Good

Religious Education:

Good

Collective Worship:

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection:

Good

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is a Good Catholic school because:

- The headteacher is relentless in her pursuit of Catholic education for all and lives out the school mission by embracing the needs of all children, seeing Christ in all, making their lives happy and working with their parents to support them and work with them to achieve for their child what they need. This work of the school is truly inspirational.
- The passion of the subject leader for Religious Education shapes the support and training opportunities made available to all staff. As a result, they have very good subject knowledge, enjoy teaching and they are highly committed to the school and parish.
- Staff continue to support pupils to plan, participate in and lead Collective Worship.

It is not yet Outstanding because:

- The monitoring and evaluation of Catholic Life does not systematically involve all stakeholders in a robust manner.
- Pupils' leadership roles within Catholic Life and Collective Worship are not yet clearly defined.
- A greater proportion of teaching in Religious Education needs to be outstanding; all teaching must be at least good.

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

- Develop systematic and robust methods for monitoring and evaluating Catholic Life, which involve all stakeholders.
- Clarify, through practice and actions, the role of pupil leadership within Catholic Life and Collective Worship.
- Further cultivate strategies that ensure the teaching of Religious Education is always at least good throughout the school.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school	Good
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	Good

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**

- There is a shared understanding of the mission of the school between pupils, staff, and leaders. It is interwoven into all areas of school life and is clearly visible in all classrooms and communal areas.
- The school community is culturally very diverse, which brings a richness to the school's ethos. Gospel values and the Catholic School Pupil Profile (CSPP) virtues are known by all and are consequently reflected in the openness, trust, tolerance, and respect, which are all key features of St Patrick's school community.
- The behaviour, conduct and attitudes of the pupils is outstanding across the school. Pupils respect each other and they are grateful for the great care that they receive from a very dedicated staff body.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They respond to staff with a high level of trust and confidence because they know that they will receive continual support that will enable them to learn about the love of God.
- The pupils contribute to their understanding of the CSPP through the 'secret spies' initiative, where they look for pupils and staff living the values and virtues in their day-to-day actions and report this to their class teacher and are then rewarded for it.
- Inclusivity and personal relationships are a strength of the school; all pupils are respected as individuals and their individual needs are catered for. As such, they accept the responsibilities of living within a Catholic school community.
- Pupils understand the importance of service and respond generously to the needs of others. They are very involved in supporting local charities, for instance St Chad's Sanctuary. They are regularly and actively involved in activities linked with CAFOD

and a range of other charity initiatives. Pupils are aware that Catholic social teachings impact on all that they do.

- The pupils have a good understanding of what it means to have a vocation and recognise the importance of using their gifts in the service of others. One pupil explained that vocation is 'what God is calling us to be.'
- Parents are proud of the way that the school maintained its support of them during the challenges of the pandemic; regular contact with home was maintained and support to enable children to access learning was given.
- Themed weeks are planned to enhance the parish and community links such as Vocations Week, Parish Week and Friends Week.
- All staff are fully committed to the Catholic Life of the school and their role in it. They recognise the importance of the values and virtues in educating the pupils to be the person God wants them to be. Staff say that 'Catholic Life happens all of the time' and they are proud to be a part of the school team.
- There is a clear sense of family and community where support for each other is a way of life.
- The school mission statement is understood by all and expresses the educational mission of the church. As a result, all staff are fully committed to the implementation of Catholic Life across the curriculum and the whole of school life and embrace any continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to further their understanding of it. Furthermore, the teaching assistants are an asset to the school and help to further enhance the school's provision of Catholic Life.
- The school is committed to educating the children in Catholic social teaching, which is evident in pupils' knowledge. For example, they are able to articulate what it means to be a steward of creation and the importance of preserving and protecting human dignity.
- Pastoral programmes for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) are thoughtfully designed and planned. Care has been taken to train staff resulting in an embedded curriculum that celebrates Catholic teachings and principles that are relevant in these areas.
- The school is a strong prayerful community. Staff meet weekly to pray as a whole staff. Leading prayer is timetabled reflecting the confidence of all involved and the impact of strong induction and community.
- The physical environment of the school reflects its Catholic mission. The wealth of religious imagery in corridors and communal areas is also reflected in classrooms, where there is a clear liturgical focus and stimulus for daily prayer. A key feature is the 'go forth' message which links to the Gospel assembly.
- Sacramental preparation is seen as a joint family-school event. The parish priest works with the school to support the families through the commitment, preparation, and the sacramental event itself.
- The school responded to the pandemic by adapting its provision to enable events and liturgy to continue, from attending Mass in 'bubbles' to holding parent consultation meetings outside.
- Pupils are supported in their chaplaincy role by the headteacher, subject leader for Religious Education and a teaching assistant. This provision covers various roles that the children are very passionate to share. They are very proud of the prayer garden and have enjoyed monitoring the class prayer tables.

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

- Governors are very passionate and supportive of the school and the headteacher.

- Governors are very dedicated and proactive. The headteacher is a strong role model for Catholic Life who is very well supported by a highly committed subject leader for Religious Education. Together, they all support each other with a passion that is rooted in a love for the pupils in their care. This enables the staff and governors to provide a very high standard of pastoral care for all pupils and their parents and carers.
- The headteacher and the subject leader for Religious Education are deeply committed to the school's mission. They provide support, opportunity, and challenge in all aspects of Catholic Life.
- The link governor regularly attends events promoting the Catholic Life and they discuss it at full governing body meetings. Consequently, all governors are kept informed of developments within Catholic Life.
- Staff new to the school receive a thorough induction. In-house support and ongoing advice are provided, and all teaching staff complete relevant training provided by the archdiocese. As a result, Early Career Framework teachers are well informed of, and committed to, the Catholic beliefs of the school and are secure in knowing that support is readily available for them in school.
- The school's partnership with parents is very strong. They feel well supported and are regularly asked for their views, which they feel are listened to. They speak very highly of the teaching staff and the headteacher.
- Strong and effective partnerships are in place with the parish and its priest. They work in partnership with the school and provide quality catechesis for pupils, staff, and parents.
- Performance management is used diligently by leaders to ensure that Catholic Life continues to remain a high priority and develop. All staff have an objective linked to Catholic Life. As a result, staff are held accountable for their contributions to school improvement.

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

- Children enter the Nursery and the Reception classes with very low levels of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. However, as they journey through the school pupils make good progress and the percentage of those working at the expected level increases.
- Evidence shows good progress for all pupil groups from their relevant starting points.

- The attainment of pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND) is monitored by the school and evidence shows some progress for these children. Their specific needs are carefully managed, and, for some, it is the experiencing of learning at a most basic level that has the most impact.
- Activities are clearly planned for and delivered to meet the needs of pupils in Religious Education.
- Pupils enjoy Religious Education lessons. Pupils from Year 5 said 'It's a peaceful time' and different from other subjects. This is the result of good working relationships in the classrooms.
- The standard of work in pupils' books is comparable to that in other core subjects.
- The use of extension questions is planned for and evidenced in lessons and in the pupils' exercise books. Consequently, pupils make progress within individual lessons.
- Pupils' exercise books demonstrate that a variety of teaching strategies is used, further contributing to their enjoyment of Religious Education lessons. They are given creative opportunities through which to develop their learning and understanding. Activities include leaflets, diaries, maps, job descriptions, writing psalms and drama.
- All teachers have good subject knowledge and staff have mostly been well developed. This is the result of quality CPD that demonstrates the subject leader's passion in keeping abreast of all new developments.
- Where questioning was effective, it allowed for the children to explore their reasoning and build upon their prior knowledge to deepen and explain their understanding of the issues covered by the curriculum. The best practice challenged pupils to use higher order thinking skills to deepen their learning. However, this practice is not yet consistent across all classrooms.
- There is some outstanding teaching at St Patrick's. When this is the case the teacher delivers material with passion, enthusiasm, and appropriate humour. As a result, in these cases, all pupils are highly engaged and exceptionally motivated to make an active contribution to group discussion.
- Where teaching was at least good, there is pace and purpose applied across the lesson, resulting in good outcomes for all pupils. In these instances, pupils are actively engaged in the lesson, apply themselves to the task in hand and share their wider knowledge to support their thinking.
- Most pupils are religiously literate and proud of their faith. They are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills in order to further develop as competent learners in Religious Education.
- Teaching Assistants are a real strength of Religious Education lessons and ensure that all pupils are able to feel a sense of achievement and enjoyment in their learning. They are a partner to the teacher; they support assessment, reinforce key subject knowledge, and develop questions for pupils.
- A variety of resources enhance learning opportunities for pupils. Good use is made of Bibles; consequently, pupils have good Bible skills.

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

- Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is a coherent reflection of accurate monitoring, analysis and self-challenge which is well-informed by current best practice.
- Governors and leaders have ensured that the school is fully compliant in meeting the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England & Wales.

- The school follows the prescribed curriculum 'Learning and Growing as the People of God'. Its planning and delivery are monitored by the subject leader and governors are kept up to date of standards and developments.
- There is a strong Catholic headteacher and subject leader who are both passionate about developing staff and who strive to achieve the best for the development of the faith life of their children. They truly live out their mission: 'Grow and work together knowing that God is with us in all we do'. This results in well targeted planning and strategic action taken by the school and an improvement in staff confidence in the delivery of Religious Education. This results in good progress across the school with increasing numbers of pupils working at or above the expected standard.
- The subject leader is committed, dedicated and passionate about raising the standards of teaching and learning in Religious Education throughout the school. She is readily available and ensures that internal and external CPD is provided for staff, who value her support and expertise.
- Assessment of Religious Education is robust; data is analysed and shared with governors termly and includes reporting on the achievements of different groups of pupils.
- The monitoring of Religious Education, which includes lesson observations, pupil interviews and book trawls, is accurate and effective. Feedback is communicated effectively leading to some improvements.
- School developmental planning tackles key areas for improvement systematically and builds on areas of strength.

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 extremely reverent and prayerful. They sing joyfully, are reflective and join in community prayer appropriately and with confidence.
- Pupils are proud of their faith and enjoy participating in school masses. The parish priest is always very impressed with their reverence and commitment. He recognises the impact of the strong role models in the school.
- Pupils' knowledge about prayer and liturgy is good. As a result, they are confident in their knowledge of the Liturgical year and how this is reflected in prayer and liturgy.

- The headteacher leads the Gospel assembly, who highlights the 'go forth' message to the pupils. This is reinforced in classrooms on displays, where it is written weekly by the teachers. This demonstrates the impact of a recent development point, to continue to explore how to reinforce this message to make it memorable to pupils.
- The school has a chaplaincy team and leaders recognise the need to grow the skills of this team. Pupils on this team are extremely enthusiastic about the liturgy that takes place in the school and their involvement in it. They enjoy 'trying to help the younger children to understand the Catholic religion'.
- Pupils respond to and participate in liturgy in age-appropriate ways. They understand the purpose of it and the school's expectations surrounding it. In each class there are prayer leaders who regularly lead prayer. Prayer leaders are confident and enthusiastic in their delivery of and participation in prayer. Their peers respond to them by demonstrating their knowledge. For example, in Year 2 the pupils shared their understanding by explaining that candles are 'God's light, which is shining. He is the light of the world'.
- Staff are confident in planning liturgy and encourage and support all pupils in planning and delivering worship.
- The children use archdiocesan resources to plan prayer as a class. These liturgies are relevant to the pupils' needs and engaging for all those involved. They are able to talk about the organisation of liturgy and how they have an input into its organisation, planning and delivery.
- There is a genuine enthusiasm for Collective Worship. In all worship seen and shared, there was a variety of resources used, this included a wonderful use of music to enhance both the atmosphere and prayer itself.
- Many opportunities for Collective Worship are given throughout the liturgical year, the highlights being sacramental celebrations, May procession, harvest, and key feast days, such as Holy Souls. This results in embedded confidence of the staff in liturgical and Catholic celebrations, enabling them to model appropriately to the pupils.
- There is evidence of parental involvement in attending masses and other opportunities for prayer in school. Parents feel welcome and a part of the school and parish community. In addition, prayer bags are sent home to initiate family prayer.
- Praying together is a daily experience for all pupils. They are confident when speaking about when they pray and why.
- The staff meets every week to pray together, and all meetings begin with prayer. All staff have the opportunity to lead prayer. They are excellent role models for the pupils and the school community as a whole.
- The school has a prayer garden which the children were very proud of. This evidences their understanding of the importance of prayer in our daily lives.
- The school also focuses very well on the teaching of traditional prayers. There are class prayer books with age-appropriate prayers in every class. Consequently, pupils understand the meaning of these prayers.
- Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the liturgical year, seasons & feasts. The impact of this is seen in pupils' responses.

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

- Leaders employ a range of strategies to deliver prayer and liturgy, including use of PowerPoint, silent reflection, spontaneous prayer, traditional and

silent prayer as well as a wide range of liturgical and reflective music. As a result, other staff follow the example set by leaders and uphold the established high standards when they organise masses and liturgies. This was evidenced in the liturgies that took place.

- The headteacher and subject leader for Religious Education monitor Collective Worship on a regular basis and governors receive feedback on the school's provision. Their work is supported by the link governor for Religious Education, who contributes to the formal monitoring of prayer and liturgy.
- Pupils also play an important part in evaluating Collective Worship. Their views are collected and analysed. They inform future developments.
- Parents are regularly consulted and strongly agree that the Collective Worship provided by the school has a positive impact on the moral and spiritual development of their child.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	104233
Local authority	Walsall
<i>This inspection was carried out under Canon 806 of Canon Law and under Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act.</i>	
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Quinn
Executive Headteacher	Jean Richmond
Telephone number	01922 720063
Website address	https://www.st-patricks.walsall.sch.uk/
Email address	postbox@st-patricks.walsall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	March 2015

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- The school is a one form entry primary school that serves the parish of St Patrick's.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 47.6%.
- 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 below average.
- Since the last inspection there has been a new headteacher and a new subject leader for Religious Education. There are currently three Early Career Teachers (ECTs) on the school's staff.

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

- The inspection was carried out by three Diocesan Inspectors: Louise Bury and Melanie Elliott. Michelle Walsh shadowed the inspection process.
- 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 all classes including nursery eight 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 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 members of the governing body including the Catholic Life link governor, the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, the acting deputy headteacher, support staff and teaching staff including the three ECTs, the parish priest, parents, the pupil chaplaincy team from Year 1 to Year 6 and a group of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6.
- The inspectors attended two classroom-based collective worships, a whole school assembly, 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 Religious Education action plan, Religious Education monitoring documents, pupils' books, teachers' planning and learning journals.