



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## INSPECTION REPORT

### ST TERESA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY ACADEMY WOLVERHAMPTON

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Inspection dates 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013  
Reporting Inspector Denis Cody

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-11 years
Number on roll	174
Appropriate authority	The Bishop Cleary MAC
Chair of Board of Directors	Chris Walker
Chair of Academy Committee	Sue Green
School address	Mallins Rd Parkfields Wolverhampton WV4 6AW
Telephone number	01902 558862
E-mail address	StTerasas.GroupEmail@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	September 2010
DFE School number	336/3311
Unique Reference Number	139893

**Principal Mrs Tamsin Davis**

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DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



## Evidence

The inspection was carried out by 1 Diocesan Inspector. The focus of the inspection was on the effectiveness and use of the school's self evaluation of religious education (RE) and Catholic life. To validate the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation of teaching and learning, the inspector observed three full RE lessons with the headteacher. In addition the inspector completed a work scrutiny and held a discussion with pupils to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time. He held meetings with the chair of governors, RE link governor, RE co-ordinator and parish priest. He observed a prayer service and undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching in RE, the presentation of the Catholic life of the school, and pupils' behaviour. He looked at a range of evidence related to the school's self evaluation such as RAISEonline, the school improvement plan, teachers' planning, and pupil assessment records. Alongside the validation of school self evaluation, the inspector gathered evidence about successful practice in the teaching and learning of RE, evidence which will be shared with other diocesan schools.

## Information about the school

St Teresa's is a smaller than average size Catholic primary school but with a growing roll. It serves the parish of St Teresa of the Infant Jesus in Wolverhampton and is situated in an area of significant social deprivation. Currently 20% of the pupils are baptised Catholics and 79% belong to minority ethnic groups. The number of pupils with special needs and/or disabilities is above the national average and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is considerably higher than average. Attainment on entry is well below the average national level. The school recently converted to a Multi-Academy Company, the Bishop Cleary Multi-Academy Company, in collaboration with three Catholic primary schools and one secondary school.

## Main Finding

In its self-evaluation St Teresa's School judges itself to be a good Catholic school in all aspects of its performance; pupil attainment and progress, teaching and learning in RE, the effectiveness of its RE curriculum and the quality of its collective worship and Catholic life. This judgement is justified because it is based on detailed, accurate, and reliable evaluation and analysis. There have been significant developments since the last inspection, and at all levels school leaders show outstanding commitment to providing a good quality experience of Catholic life for all pupils. To this end the school should now develop and formalise its self-evaluation processes in relation to the quality of pupils' learning in RE, and include planning for Catholic life in its school development plan.

## School self-evaluation

The school's commitment to accurate self-evaluation is reflected in its use of an experienced headteacher from another school to validate some of its own judgements. There is a clear link between accurate self-evaluation and school improvement planning. School leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and the areas to be developed, and its judgements are reliable.

The school's judgement that RE teaching is good is based on thorough and effective evaluation procedures. Formal lesson observations are accompanied by 'voice of learner' surveys to obtain pupil feedback; learning walks and book trawls are carried out by senior leaders including the RE link governor; and the RE co-ordinator analyses pupil attainment and evaluates teacher planning. These activities all result in feedback to individual teachers

and collective sharing of good practice and areas for development. They also contribute to future staff training and school improvement planning. As a result the school has identified and is addressing the need to provide pupils with greater opportunities for self and peer assessment and also to ensure all lessons address the needs of pupils in terms of pace and teaching styles.

The judgement that learning is good is supported by the school's analysis of pupil data regarding progress and attainment in different year groups. Pupil surveys and lesson observations indicate that children enjoy and are positively engaged in RE lessons. Attainment mapping across the units of work for one child in each year group shows that pupils' learning encompasses aspects from both learning about and learning from religion. However the judgements regarding learning and progress are less secure because the school has not yet identified the key learning skills involved in RE and how they could be monitored and evaluated.

In its summative self-evaluation document the school judges monitoring and evaluation of Catholic life and collective worship to be very good. This is supported by the close involvement and scrutiny of the governing body and by the use of reviews, audits and learning walks to evaluate and improve provision. St Teresa's RE link governor is a member of the school's own Academy Committee and the Board of Directors. She has carried out school visits, interviewed children, taken part in learning walks, school prayers, classroom visits and book trawls, and subsequently reported back to the governing body. In the course of these activities the use of attainment levels in RE was identified as an area for development, in response to which the school has developed interactive 'Learning Walls' illustrating the relevant attainment targets for each age group and helping pupils understand what they need to do to achieve them. Pupil representatives have also made presentations directly to a governing body committee on their experience of RE and Catholic life in the school. The governors are also involved in discussions around the school self-evaluation document. Consequently the governing body is well informed and able to play a full and active part in the leadership of Catholic life and RE in the school.

The principal and RE co-ordinator lead the process of collecting and analysing information about Catholic life and collective worship. Since the appointment of the principal in April 2012 feedback has been regularly collected from staff and pupils after gospel assemblies and school Masses and overviews have been compiled of classroom prayer and the use of prayer areas. Parent feedback is also invited through annual Catholic life questionnaires. The results of all of these are examined and become part of school improvement planning. Where appropriate they are reflected in staff performance management targets. Issues are addressed, new initiatives introduced, and staff training updated

The process culminates in the production of the school development plan, which is designed around the Ofsted judgement sub-headings, and into which the RE action plan has been subsumed to align RE planning with that of other core subjects. This works very well for RE where initiatives focus on teaching and learning. Catholic life, however, does not fit so easily into the Ofsted format, and, as the heart of what the school is about, Catholic life should lead the school improvement planning.

Curriculum initiatives and developments also emerge from the school's programme of self-review affecting both teaching methods and content. For example there has been an increased focus on differentiated teaching and a concentration on learning from religion. Follow up meetings and lesson observations show that these areas are being addressed by teachers and the quality of teaching and delivery of the curriculum are improving across the school. Currently the family life and sex education provision is under review in order to complement the '*All that I Am*' scheme of work.

School leaders, including governors, provide strong and effective leadership of all aspects of RE and a positive vision for the future as they guide the school through the process of amalgamation into a Multi-Academy Company. Together they ensure that RE and Catholic life have a high priority and are constantly under review in order to promote continuing school improvement. Therefore the capacity for improvement in both Catholic life and RE is excellent.

### **Overall effectiveness of the school<sup>1</sup>**

Pupils' achievement in RE is good. Baseline assessment shows that most pupils enter the Foundation Stage with very little religious knowledge or experience. However from this low starting point pupils of all abilities, and those from vulnerable groups, then make good progress. The number of pupils achieving at or above expected levels increases as they move through the school, so that the great majority leave Year 6 with at least the expected level of attainment. Internal lesson observations and pupil feedback show that pupils of all abilities enjoy RE, taking part actively in a wide range of activities and behaving well during lessons. In order to improve attainment, pupil performance data is carefully analysed and used to inform planning and discover where additional support may be necessary. At the same time the school is making a greater commitment to collaborative moderation of pupils' work to ensure the accuracy of its data.

Pupils contribute positively to, and benefit from, the Catholic life of the school. This is evident in their good behaviour, support for one another, and in the encouragement they receive to reflect on their own behaviour and its consequences. Links are established with the Catholic community and the wider communities beyond the school through their role in the parish and in collaboration with children from other schools in local and diocesan celebrations and initiatives. The pupils' sense of vocation and service to others is fostered by older pupils supporting younger ones and by the opportunity for pupils to assume roles of responsibility, such as liturgical leaders. It is given practical substance by their support for charitable fundraising and commitment to the Fairtrade movement.

Provision of collective worship is good and pupils respond well to all forms of worship both in and out of school. They show reverence during Masses and also participate fully in preparing and delivering prayers, readings and hymns. There has been a good response to the termly Sunday family parish Masses led by the school, and to out of school collective worship organised jointly by Wolverhampton Catholic schools.

Pupil responses and formal observations show they enjoy and engage in gospel assemblies which are delivered by senior school leaders, and which encourage pupil participation. Each class presents a class assembly twice a year based on the work being done in RE at the time. These assemblies, to which parents are invited, are prepared and led by pupils, as are the daily class prayers which take place throughout the school. Liturgical leaders elected in each class are responsible for preparing and maintaining the class prayer tables in line with feast days and the liturgical calendar, older children helping younger ones.

Teaching is good, with teachers demonstrating sound subject knowledge, use of ICT and, in the case of the best lessons, varied teaching styles and assessment for learning techniques. Pupils enjoy RE lessons. Good classroom management skills and interesting and well-planned lessons encourage pupil engagement and interest. Teachers and

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<sup>1</sup> As the quality of the school self evaluation has been affirmed, the judgements in this section of the report conform to those of the school.

classroom assistants provide good support to enable all children to make good progress, including those with special education needs and those whose first language is not English.

The school has an ongoing focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning, spearheaded in the case of RE by the new subject co-ordinator. Under her leadership and that of the principal, areas such as moderation of pupils' work, differentiation in teaching and coverage of Attainment Target 2 have been and continue to be addressed.

The RE curriculum follows the Diocesan Curriculum Strategy '*Learning and Growing as the People of God.*' The school follows the diocesan guidance in relation to planning and pupil assessment helping to ensure continuity and progression across the school. The curriculum is enriched and supported by a variety of extension activities to ensure it meets the needs of pupils. RE is taught as a separate subject but close cross-curricular links are promoted, particularly with PSHE. Provision of learning about other faiths and cultures includes a 'Multi-Faith Fortnight' and visits to places of worship from other faiths.

### **Recommendations**

- Develop formal processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning in RE
- Include a specific category for 'Catholic Life' in the school development plan.



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November 2013

Dear Parents and Carers

**Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of St Teresa's Catholic Primary Academy,  
November 2013**

I am writing this letter to share with you the findings of the diocesan inspection of your children's school. Diocesan inspection now explores in detail the school's own view of itself as expressed in its self-evaluation. For this reason, much of the report is more technical than used to be the case. You are still entitled to have a copy of the full report should you want one and it will be available on the school website or by request from the school office.

St Teresa's is a good Catholic primary school which celebrates the equality, diversity and uniqueness of all its pupils. Emphasis is placed on spiritual, moral and vocational development within a strong Catholic ethos. Collective worship is of good quality pupils respond well to all forms of worship both in and out of school. The ethos encourages and is reflected in the positive behaviour, attitudes and relationships of the pupils.

Children feel happy and secure and speak positively about the school. They enjoy taking part in religious education lessons and in the wider Catholic life of the school. The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils. The teaching of religious education is good so children can make good progress in the subject.

The principal and governors provide strong leadership for the school. They make very sound and secure judgements about the Catholic life and religious education. They have a good understanding of its needs and plan effectively for improvement in all aspects of Catholic life and religious education. A good foundation has been established for the school as it moves into the Bishop Cleary Multi-Academy Company.

To help them in this I have recommended that they develop ways to evaluate in greater detail the quality of pupils' learning in RE and of the different aspects of Catholic life within the school; and that they continue to include Catholic life at the heart of school planning.

I very much enjoyed spending two days at the school, working with the staff and children and having the opportunity to meet a few parents. I would like to thank everyone for their support and warm welcome. The children were friendly, helpful and very well-behaved, a credit to their school and families.

Yours sincerely

Denis Cody  
Diocesan Inspector