



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection Report

ARCHBISHOP ILSLEY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Part of the St Teresa of Calcutta Multi Academy Company

Victoria Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 7XY

Inspection dates: 3-4 December 2019
Lead Inspector: Sarah Hatfield

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:

- Most staff and pupils appreciate, value and actively participate in the Catholic Life of the school. The school is characterised by positive relationships and pastoral care that are rooted in our Catholic faith.
- Outcomes in Religious Education are improving, and the teaching of Religious Education is consistently good.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of many pupils, irrespective of their ability or faith background.
- The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. Leaders are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole community.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Religious Education in Key Stage 3 does not meet the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England & Wales.
- The school needs to increase the capacity for specialist teaching of Religious Education, and consequently continue to improve outcomes in Key Stage 4.
- Feedback in Religious Education needs to become more effective in enabling pupils to make progress.
- Collective Worship needs to involve more pupils in its leadership, particularly in Key Stages 3 & 4.

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

- Ensure 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education in Key Stage 3.
- Realise its plan to fully staff the Religious Education department with specialist teachers and increase its capacity for further effective monitoring, which leads to improvements.
- Embed the new feedback policy, so that teachers' comments enable pupils to readily make progress.
- Afford pupils in Key Stages 3 & 4 more opportunities to plan and lead Collective Worship.
- Support pupils so that they can confidently and consistently respond to both traditional and contemporary forms of prayer.

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

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school

- The school has made considerable efforts in making the school's physical environment explicitly Catholic. Governors and pupils say that the building 'now looks like a Catholic school'. Traditional and modern artwork and artefacts are displayed and used to inspire reflection. For example, the crib is displayed openly in one of the most used areas of the school during Advent & Christmas; pupils enjoy being able to see this and show great respect for it as an article of faith.
- Most pupils appreciate, value and effectively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school. A more rigorous approach to evaluation of Catholic Life is evident.
- Almost all pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others, as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of almost all pupils is exemplary at all times and pupils are supportive of each other. This is evident in classrooms and, notably, in the Sixth Form, where students comment that they all actively try and help and support each other and are glad when others succeed.
- Most pupils accept the responsibility of living within a Catholic school community. Pupil voice exercises indicate that pupils believe 'It is important to love your neighbour and share what we have got'; 'the school is welcoming, we are all one family, part of God's community' and 'When we pray it's like incense' that goes up to Heaven.'
- Newly Qualified Teachers and pupils recognise the value of being part of a Catholic school community and acknowledge its impact in both faith and relationships with

others. Pupils comment that relationships are so good because of the religion which made them 'treat others as you would like to be treated'.

- The school uses materials recommend by the diocese for its delivery of relationships & sex education. Pupils can articulate Catholic values and beliefs regarding marriage and personal relationships.
- Most pupils embrace a holistic approach to education, they comment that, whilst the school values academic achievement, 'the school offers more than that'. Pupils believe that the school develops them as a whole person and makes them want to act kindly and improves their understanding of God and each other. The concept of kindness permeates every aspect of school life and is explicitly linked to faith.
- The Catholic School Pupil Profile (CSPP) is integral to the pastoral system. Pupils often reflect upon the relevant virtue as part of a reconciliation when there is an issue.
- A focus on vocations, including increased opportunities for service, has been effective in developing pupils' understanding of their ability and responsibility to help others. Faith in action is shown on a daily basis through charitable work locally, nationally and internationally. For example, the students in Sixth Form organise a party for elderly citizens, and form groups throughout the school collect and create hampers for this. Pupils are also involved in Operation Christmas Child and Remembrance Day initiatives.
- Pupils feel cared for and are provided with what they need, particularly when their own families are in hardship. The school's St Vincent de Paul group has distributed several hampers to families in need within the school community.
- Sixth Form students raise money to fund their attendance at the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes Pilgrimage. This experience makes an extremely positive impact on those who join it.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- Senior leaders model Catholic Life strongly. As a result, the school is a positive and cohesive faith community. All staff witness to the faith through their kindness and positive relationships with everyone in the community.
- The school's new mission statement involved contribution from pupils. Consequently, some pupils have ownership of the mission and understand its relevance to them. However, the school needs to make this mission more explicit on its website and reinforce its meaning with all pupils, as some confuse it with the school motto.
- Opportunities for staff retreats exist, although the school desires to increase the number of staff participating in these.
- There is a clear sense of community at all levels, staff and pupils talked about the school as a Catholic family. For example, the subject leader for business studies has included the CSPP in pupils' reflections within her curriculum area. Staff and pupils alike support members of staff who are suffering with their health.
- Governors speak enthusiastically about the impact of taking pupils to Mass in their local church, which they also comment has been greatly appreciated by the parish. Parishioners at Mass were extremely positive about their increased interaction with the pupils. Non-Catholic pupils were given reassurances by the parish priest and other staff to help them to participate fully. Year 7 pupils say they enjoy attending Mass and spending time with Jesus. Pupils appreciate the work of the parish priest, saying that he always tries to help them understand the Mass better and make it relevant to them.

- The school provides many opportunities for the moral development of staff and pupils. Staff benefit from continuous professional development on spirituality, which was delivered across several INSET days. As a result, staff feel supported in their roles and feel able to approach senior leader leaders with any difficulties they experience.
- The CSPP and increased opportunities for prayer are key vehicles for staff and pupils to focus on their moral and spiritual development.
- Parents are enthusiastic about the school's provision for Catholic Life. One commented to inspectors that 'there is a strong Catholic ethos that flows throughout the school, every member of the school is treated equally and respectfully'.
- Pupils enjoy the school's chaplaincy provision, which is mostly facilitated by key school staff, with support from the parish. A group of pupils attend the Legion of Mary and pray the rosary weekly. Furthermore, the chaplaincy group leads aspects of worship and charitable work. Pupils involved in these groups state that they have a positive impact on their faith and everyday life.
- Pastoral programmes are faith-based and reflective. Pupils enjoy most pastoral activities and recognise that these support their spiritual development. Consequently, bullying is rare, and pupils know where to get help if it does occur. Reflection and reconciliation sheets used within the pastoral system demonstrate that pupils rely on their spiritual development to overcome difficulties.
- The school makes a particular effort to assist individuals who are disadvantaged in any way.

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

- Senior leaders and governors are deeply committed to the mission of the Church. The headteacher has personally driven and energised the faith life of the school and, in turn, has been greatly supported by the person in charge of the Catholic Life of the school (PICCLS), whose passion and drive has helped to rapidly drive school development in this area. The whole community is energised by this passion.
- Monitoring and evaluation are now undertaken regularly and there is evidence of this leading to planned improvements. For example, governors undertook a 'canonical walk' around the school site with the headteacher to appraise its effectiveness in physically displaying its mission. Subsequently, significant changes have been made to make its Catholic identity more prominent.
- Self-evaluation is honest, reflective and evidence based. The headteacher clearly articulates the progress the school has made to date and has written targeted plans for future improvement.
- Governors act as critical friends and 'do not take anything at face value'. They see their role as supportive but also understand the need to challenge and seek evidence. Governors engage in training and, as a result, have adopted a more rigorous and robust approach to their work.
- The school responds well to diocesan policies and promotes the Bishops' vision for Catholic education.

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

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Most pupils make good progress in Religious Education relative to their starting points. In Key Stage 3, outcomes are improving year-on-year. Outcomes in Key Stage 4 are also improving and are moving closer towards the average diocesan level of progress. Key Stage 5 outcomes in A-level Religious Education are now a significant strength of the school's post-16 provision.
- A-level Religious Education is the most popular subject in the Sixth Form, a reflection of students' respect for the faith and the quality of teaching provided by the department.
- Relationships between teacher of Religious Education and pupils are strong and effective for learning.
- The school needs to continue to focus on the attainment and progress of pupils from significant groups. The school is using appropriate strategies to try and narrow the gaps and staff are passionate about caring for pupils who belong to these groups.
- Pupils understand the impact that religion has on their daily life and most are religiously literate. Students enjoy the subject; most approach Religious Education with interest and enthusiasm.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is at least good, poor behaviour rarely becomes an issue. However, pupils' attitudes to the school's 'behaviour for learning' policy are sometimes passive.
- Students have respect for the subject and most of the books are well presented. The quality of written work was excellent in the Sixth Form. The quality of written work is generally good in the main school, with some examples of excellent work.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching is good. However, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to provide pupils with active learning, paired and group work. There is a greater experience of teacher-led learning rather than pupil activity learning. There is some outstanding teaching in the Sixth Form, where these opportunities are included in teachers' planning.
- Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge.
- Teachers need to consistently use assessment mats and methodologies to produce quality feedback to inform their planning. In the Sixth Form, and in some other classes, feedback is effective, but often pupils do not respond to it; consequently, the progress they make can be limited at times. Teachers' feedback is effective

when students are trained how to use feedback sheets, when feedback is written as a command and when pupils' responses are checked. Good practice needs to be fully embedded; the school's leadership understand this and are increasing their monitoring of the department's implementation of its feedback policy.

- The school should reconsider its use of assessment in order to maximise pupil progress. A combination of teacher, peer and pupil assessment will balance this need whilst also considering staff wellbeing.
- Teachers manage time well and have restructured the curriculum to tell the whole story of the faith. Questioning is used effectively in many lessons to adapt teachers' explanations to enable all pupils' understanding. Teachers communicate high expectations to all their classes.
- In Key Stage 3, tasks are not always set in a way that support all pupils to make progress. Consequently, some pupils do not believe Religious Education to be as challenging as other core subjects. The school must reconsider its approach to this.
- Achievement and effort are often celebrated, linking in with school values with certificates, celebration evening events and communication with home.

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

- The current Key Stage 3 curriculum requires improvement to be good because it is below the required 10% timetable allocation.
- Staffing in the Religious Education department has been a challenge, but senior leaders have worked hard to minimise any adverse effect on pupils, particularly those in examination classes. The PICCLS has also taken the additional responsibility of acting subject leader for Religious Education recently, though a substantive appointment has now been made for this post.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and learning and understood accurately the need to continue to improve feedback. All observation feedback between the inspectors and senior leaders were in alignment during the inspection, demonstrating that the school makes accurate judgements about the quality of teaching in Religious Education.
- The headteacher and staff are open and honest in their self-evaluation and in meetings with each other. Self-evaluation opportunities by leaders and governors are increasingly good, but capacity will be increased further by the arrival of the new Religious Education subject leadership team.
- Governors are much more critical than they used to be and visit the school regularly. They don't accept anything without evidence and visit Religious Education lessons to observe lessons, review books and speak to pupils. Their feedback to senior leaders is used to contribute towards improvement planning.
- Religious Education is treated correctly as a core subject and given the same amount of resourcing. The school uses recommended diocesan courses and resources. Leaders and governors ensure Religious Education is planned to meet the needs of pupils, including using strategies to close gaps between groups.

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

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship

- Pupils use a variety of approaches to prayer, both traditional and contemporary. The school has planned to further enhance pupils' knowledge of traditional prayers.
- Pupils are appreciative of having time to pray at the start and end of every day, which they say, 'is a very good way to start and end, with Jesus' and 'this is a good pattern for your life'.
- Pupils act with reverence, most are keen to participate, and all are always respectful.
- Whilst some pupils need encouragement and further instruction, the majority of pupils verbally respond during Collective Worship. Pupils know that standards are improving and appreciate this.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of the Liturgical Year, as it is reinforced in all acts of Collective Worship. Pupils knowledge of liturgical colours has improved as a direct result of the introduction of prayer corners in classrooms.
- Students are being given more opportunities to lead Collective Worship; sixth formers produced an assembly they had developed and delivered to younger pupils in their houses. Other sixth formers talked about raising funds to attend the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. Pupils are increasingly involved in leadership of Collective Worship, although more needs to be done to foster a culture of leadership in the main school.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual development of staff and pupils and is universally cherished.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the School

- Collective Worship is part of the life of the school and students pray together every day.
- Pupils say that they enjoy assemblies and form prayer time and recognise that Collective Worship has a purpose, message and direction.
- During one of the assemblies observed by inspectors, Deacon Tim and the Head of House spoke eloquently about the feast day of St Francis Xavier, the Gospel and its message for us today. Pupils said they find this approach to Collective Worship 'inspirational'.
- The school is making far better use of the parish church and is well supported by its deacon and two parish priests. Pupils, parents and parishioners spoke with enthusiasm about the experience of the school attending regular Masses this year.
- Collective Worship is given high priority and is engaging.

- Other adults are invited to Collective Worship and the school facilitates their attendance, for example, the Year 7 welcome assembly and regular parish Masses. The legion of Mary also attends and interacts with the pupils.

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

- Senior leaders know how to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. They have a good understanding of the Liturgical Year, seasons and feasts and make these accessible for their pupils.
- Relevant staff know how to support pupil leadership of Collective Worship.
- Senior leaders continue to offer training to support non-Catholic staff confidence in leading Collective Worship and supporting pupils' leadership.
- Senior leaders are effective leaders of Collective Worship within the school and are role models for staff. They promote planning and leading Collective Worship and support other staff development in this aspect. They regularly review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation and provided substantial evidence of evaluation and reflection, which leads to improvement planning.
- Leaders understand and support all requirements of the diocesan bishop in terms of Collective Worship.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	146124
Local authority	Birmingham
<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	Secondary
School category	Academy
Age range	11-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	1206
Appropriate authority	Board of directors
Chair of the local academy committee	Frances McGarry
Headteacher	Helen Burrows
Telephone number	0121 706 4200
Website address	www.ilsley.bham.sch.uk
Email address	enquiry@ilsley.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8-9 November 2014

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- Archbishop Ilsley is a larger than average sized secondary school, serving the Catholic community in East Birmingham.
- The school serves the parish of Holy Souls & Sacred Heart.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 51%.

- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils (43%) is significantly above the national average.
- The percentage of SEND pupils (9.3%) is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with EAL (24%) is above the national average.
- Attainment on entry is broadly in line with the national average.
- Since the last inspection the school has converted to become an academy, forming part of the St Teresa of Calcutta Multi Academy Company. A new headteacher has also been appointed.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors: Sarah Hatfield and Francis Waugh.
- 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 12 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 RE teaching on their learning over time and their experience of Collective Worship.
- Meetings were held with four governors, including the chair, the Catholic Life link governor, the headteacher, the acting subject leader for Religious Education/the person in charge of the Catholic Life of the school, the parish deacon, parish priest, teachers and other staff, pupil groups (including the chaplaincy group and non-Catholic pupils) and members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors attended a whole school Mass, two house assemblies and four form-based Collective Worship sessions. 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 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, teachers' planning and learning journals and governors' minutes.