



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Part of the Pope Francis Multi Academy Company

London Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 5AX

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| Inspection date | 14 th & 15 th June 2017 |
| Reporting Inspector | Maureen O'Leary |
| Assistant Inspector | Malcolm Tipping |

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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| Type of School | Academy |
| Age range of pupils | 4 – 11 years |
| Number on roll | 203 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of Directors |
| Chair of Governors | Winefride Brack |
| Telephone number | 01608 643487 |
| E-mail address | office.3420@holy-trinity.oxon.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | July 2012 |
| DFE School Number | 931/3420 |
| Unique Reference Number | 141150 |

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| Headteacher | Lorna Buchanan |
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| Previous inspection: | Good |
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| This inspection: | Good |
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DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



MAKING CHRIST KNOWN TODAY

Evidence

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors.
- The focus of the inspection was on the quality, leadership, and impact of the school's provision of Catholic life, collective worship, and religious education (RE).
- The inspectors observed teaching across seven RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic life, worship, and the impact of teaching on their learning over time.
- Meetings were held with the parish priest, chair of governors and RE link governor, the headteacher, and the assistant headteacher and the RE subject leader.
- The inspectors attended a parish/school Mass, a Key Stage 2 assembly, Year 1 class collective worship 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.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents including the school's self evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals.

Information about the school

- Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School is a one form entry school that serves the parish of Holy Trinity in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire.
- Pupils are predominately white British.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 30%.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils is well below national averages.
- The number of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) is in line with national averages.
- Attainment on entry is inline with the national average.
- Since the last inspection the school has become part of The Pope Francis Multi Academy Company (MAC). A new headteacher, assistant headteacher and RE subject leader have also been appointed.

Main Findings

- The provision and outcomes for Catholic life at Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School are good with some outstanding features. Collective worship and RE are both good.
- The school's leaders and staff value their Catholic mission in education and seek to help all pupils come to a deeper understanding of the Faith.
- Pupils' values, behaviour and commitment to a life of service are outstanding and they firmly reflect the Catholic ethos of the school.
- There is a very good partnership between the school and the local parish. Jointly they support and inspire each other to share the Catholic faith.
- Governors are frequent visitors to the school and contribute in a very practical way to the Catholic life of the community. As a result, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in regards to its Catholic life and RE. Governors now need to participate more formally in the strategic monitoring and evaluation of the school's Catholic life.

- A variety of acts of worship are provided for pupils and they participate in them with reverence and appreciation. They welcome this time to meet God in prayer. To enhance prayer further pupils and staff would benefit from more frequent moments of stillness and reflection.
- RE at the school is well taught and teachers work hard to ensure lessons are engaging and enjoyable for pupils. Pupils make good progress and meet diocesan age related expectations. The school is now ready to provide more challenge to pupils, especially in regard to their understanding of the meaning of religion.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

Catholic life, collective worship and spiritual, moral and vocational development: provision and outcomes

- The Catholic life of the school is good with some outstanding features.
- The extent to which pupils benefit from the Catholic life of the school is outstanding.
- The implementation of the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile has been successfully undertaken by all staff. Pupils' responses to each pair of virtues and values are rewarded through the school's behaviour management system. This has contributed to the outstanding behaviour of pupils which reflects the Catholic ethos of the school.
- Pupils clearly understand, value and contribute significantly to the strong Catholic mission of the school. As a result, they are keen to enthusiastically express their views and beliefs.
- The school undertakes a range of charitable outreach, which is chosen by the pupils. In this way they participate constructively in the Catholic life of the school. As one child expressed during the inspection, they feel that by supporting charities they are "...following God."
- The moral development of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils have a profound understanding of their Christian vocation and this is a strength of the school. Consequently, they recognise that they are called to a life of service to others; within their own school, to the wider community and in their future careers.
- The spiritual development of pupils is good. It is supported by both the collective worship of the school and the RE curriculum.
- The whole school curriculum is outstanding in supporting its Catholic life.
- Considering the engagement and value pupils place on the Catholic life of the school they should now be involved more in its evaluation.
- Collective worship within the school is good.
- The celebration of Mass is greatly enhanced by the parish priest's thoughtful and child friendly homilies. He actively facilitates the full involvement of pupils in the celebration of the Eucharist. As a result, pupils routinely act as altar servers, Mass greeters and readers.
- The school and parish of Holy Trinity work very effectively together in a number of ways: parishioners visit the school to hear pupils read and the parish contributes significant amounts financially to the school. There is an excellent relationship between the parish and the school. Therefore, pupils and staff greatly appreciate and are at ease in their beautiful parish church, which is situated adjacent to the school.
- Mass is celebrated regularly. However, considering the close proximity of the church and the active involvement of the parish priest with the school, its frequency could now be reviewed to consider if it could be increased further.
- The whole school community takes part in collective worship with reverence and appreciation.

- Class and whole school collective worship is varied. The school has celebrated a harvest festival and May procession in which pupils participated actively.
- Children are given the opportunities to experience different forms of prayer and the use of scripture during collective worship. Pupils' response during collective worship is marked by their ease when praying, their respectful participation and the reverence they give to the word of God. However, there are few moments given to stillness and reflection in prayer which allow pupils to make a personal response to God.
- Pupil liturgy leaders have responded confidently to the invitation to lead collective worship at both class and whole school level. Pupils now need to be given more opportunities to initiate and plan collective worship within their own class settings.
- The school has recently reviewed and updated their prayer bags which are regularly taken home by pupils. These contain high quality and thought provoking activities that both engage and evangelise pupils and carers. Feedback from families about the impact of these prayer bags has been very positive. This excellent resource could now be shared with other schools throughout the diocese.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and Collective Worship

- The leadership of the Catholic life and collective worship of the school is good.
- The leaders, staff and governors all clearly demonstrate a strong commitment to the Catholic mission of the school and are eager to enhance it further.
- A strength of the leadership of the school is the positive relationship between staff and the governors. Governors are involved weekly in the life of the school in a practical way; the chair of governors supports learning in the sacramental classes and attends the majority of school Masses. This commitment and experience ensures that the chair of governors is knowledgeable about all areas of the Catholic life of the school.
- Governors are informed formally about the Catholic life of the school through the headteacher's termly reports. Currently this report focuses on provision and lacks any robust challenge by governors. Governors now need to increase their participation in the strategic formal monitoring and evaluation of RE, Catholic life and collective worship.
- Leaders have undertaken the monitoring of the prayer areas around the school and observations of collective worship. This has supported their self-evaluation of these aspects of the Catholic life of the school. However, although some formal monitoring of the Catholic life of the school is carried out, it lacks cohesive planning and rigorous evaluation.
- The governing body meets all its statutory and canonical duties well, except in one respect. It needs to address the issue of appointing practising Catholics as the two most senior leaders in the school; this will enable them to meet all the requirements from the Bishops' Conference.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- The leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education are all good.
- The RE subject leader conducts a range of monitoring relating to the provision of RE. Some of this monitoring has been conducted jointly with governors or the diocesan adviser for RE. Strengths and areas for development are clearly identified following lesson observations and book scrutinies, and these evaluations are fed back to staff and appropriate actions are then taken to improve teaching and learning.

- The RE subject lead has rightly identified that the evaluation of all monitoring needs to be more strategic in order to inform future improvement planning.
- Pupils generally reach good standards in RE in line with diocesan expectations. The school is correctly addressing the issue of raising attainment to above diocesan expectations for a greater number of pupils.
- Pupils make good progress in RE. As a result of teaching that is accurately matched to pupils' abilities and focused on pupil challenge, this progress is accelerated in Reception class and upper Key Stage 2. This model of teaching needs to be used throughout the school to improve progress for all pupils but especially to provide greater challenge for more able pupils. Teachers need to consistently adapt the suggested activities in the diocesan strategy in order to facilitate this challenge.
- Teachers assess pupils regularly in RE and often adapt their teaching accordingly to meet their needs. However, there is a need for more thorough moderation of teacher assessments, possibly across the MAC. This will enable teachers and senior leaders to be secure in their judgements of pupils' performance against diocesan expectations.
- Teachers plan effectively to provide pupils with a variety of tasks in RE that include drama, singing and art which engage and enthuse. This diversity is especially creative in Year 5. As a result, the vast majority of pupils throughout the school enjoy RE. One child summarised the pupils' evaluation of RE by saying "*It's always really, really fun!*" During the inspection, the Year 1 class particularly enjoyed flying paper aeroplanes as they thought about how the Gospel writers spread the Good News.
- Pupils exhibit outstanding behaviours for learning during RE and they regard it as a special lesson. Consequently, they take pride in the presentation of their books and the quality of their work is comparable to that of their English work. The sense that their RE book is distinct from other subjects is especially pronounced in Year 5.
- Teachers often ask questions, set tasks and provide feedback to pupils that challenge them to reflect on the meaning of RE in their own lives. When asked what RE lessons had taught them one pupil replied "*Whatever situation you are in, God is with you.*"
- Pupils are aware of how to improve their work in RE through a variety of strategies. In some classes this feedback is excellent and regularly expects pupils to reflect on their own and others' beliefs and values. This excellent practice should now be extended throughout the school.
- Additional adults available during RE lessons provide good support to pupils. A teaching assistant, observed during a Year 4 lesson, demonstrated excellent subject knowledge as she skilfully supported pupils to be independent learners. However, in a few instances teaching assistants are not used as effectively as they could be during teacher led discussions.
- The school follows the diocesan RE strategy *Learning and Growing as the People of God*, but should review the amount and quality of work completed work on Christmas and Easter in some classes.
- Pupils regularly visit places of worship related to other faiths and are visited by religious leaders of other faiths. The school has also held themed weeks that focus on other faiths and beliefs. As a result, they have an excellent knowledge of other faiths and beliefs.
- The school provides relationship and sex education in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church at an age appropriate level.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- Improve teacher subject knowledge and confidence to deliver the RE strategy in order to ensure all groups of learners are suitably challenged.
- Increase the robust monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic life of the school.
- Develop the role of the governors in the strategic formal monitoring and evaluation of RE, Catholic life and collective worship.
- Develop the prayer life of the school to provide moments of stillness and reflection that allow for personal responses to God.
- To address the issue of appointing practising Catholics as the two most senior leaders in the school. This will enable the school to meet all the requirements from the Bishops' Conference.