



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## INSPECTION REPORT

### OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL COVENTRY

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Inspection dates 14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2012  
Reporting Inspector Mr 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	3-11 years
Number on roll	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Mr Kevin Lambert
School address	Hawthorn Lane Tile Hill Coventry CV4 9LB
Telephone number	02476 466655
E-mail address	headteacher@ourlady.coventry.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 1998
DFE School number	331/3408
Unique Reference Number	103712

**Headteacher** Mrs Kate Connelly

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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 two 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 staff, with the parish priest, and with the vice chair of governors and RE link governor. He observed a whole school assembly 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 development plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals. Alongside the validation of school self evaluation, the inspector gathered evidence about assessment for learning, evidence which will be shared with other diocesan schools.

## **Information about the school**

Our Lady of the Assumption is an average size Catholic primary school with a part-time nursery. It serves the parish of Our Lady of the Assumption in Coventry and is situated in an area of some social deprivation. Currently 65% of the pupils are baptised Catholics. The proportion of ethnic minority pupils is 17%, below the national average but rising significantly in recent years. The number of pupils with special needs and/or disabilities is higher than the national average and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is significantly higher than average. Attainment on entry is below the level of national expectation overall, and well below in terms of communication, language and literacy. The headteacher was appointed in April 2010.

## **Main Finding**

In its self-evaluation Our Lady of the Assumption school judges itself to be a good Catholic school which strives for excellence in teaching and enjoyment of learning within an active community of faith. The whole community is proud of its excellent and distinctive Catholic ethos. These judgements are fully justified. The leadership team, supported and assisted by the governing body and parish priest, is committed to the promotion of all aspects of Catholic life and religious education throughout the school. To this end the school should adopt formal structures for evaluating the quality and impact of its Catholic life, and continue to extend its processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning.

## **School self-evaluation**

In its self evaluation document the school describes itself as 'a self-evaluating school with a very good awareness of our strengths and weaknesses.' In terms of its monitoring of teaching in RE this statement is more than justified. Lesson observations are carried out and recorded and feedback focuses on areas for development as well as examples of good practice to be shared. The results of pupil interviews and school learning walks are fed back to teachers, highlighting concerns, actions required and areas to celebrate. These are subsequently revisited to assess the impact of staff responses. Work scrutinies are also used and similarly followed up to ensure the leadership team has an accurate understanding of the quality of RE teaching throughout the school. Consequently the school's judgement that overall teaching in RE is good and sometimes very good is accurate. This can be further validated by the impact of teaching reflected in the quality of work produced by pupils and in their discussion about their religious education and its

relevance to their own lives. Lessons observed were well-planned and differentiated, and the children were challenged and enjoyed their learning.

The school judges its monitoring and evaluation of RE to be satisfactory but it is good because school leaders have a very good understanding of the school and its needs, and even where there are areas to be developed, in the main they have been accurately identified and included in forward planning. For example attainment and progress achieved by pupils in RE are monitored and tracked throughout the school. Self-evaluation here has identified the need to extend current assessment procedures, for example by incorporating the *National Levels of Attainment in Religious Education* into its RE monitoring and assessment programme.

There is less evidence of the monitoring and assessment of the quality of learning as distinct from teaching or attainment. To address this, the school needs first to identify the skills required for successful and progressive learning in RE and ensure that opportunities to develop them are built into the curriculum. A skills audit has been included in the school's RE development plan.

Although 'Catholic life and RE' is included in the school's monitoring and evaluation cycle, in terms of Catholic life the self-evaluation document focuses predominantly on provision rather than quality or impact on pupils. It includes evidence of very positive feedback from parents and indicates positive responses from pupils in terms of enjoyment and eagerness to participate.

To monitor the quality of collective worship, the headteacher and RE link governor have observed staff leading prayer services and the link governor has observed the headteacher. Reports are subsequently presented at governors' meetings. The headteacher regularly joins classes for their class prayer times. Pupils' reverence in Mass and at prayer times, their enthusiasm to take part in collective worship and positive responses from parents and parishioners is provided as further evidence of the good quality of collective worship in the school.

The section on the curriculum and its effectiveness is also heavily weighted towards description rather than evaluation of the quality of curriculum provision. However it is clear that as part of the school's annual monitoring and evaluation process the curriculum is reviewed and adapted in the light of current experience and to ensure it remains up to date and relevant to the needs of the pupils. Recently the family life and sex education programme and the provision for teaching about other faiths were reviewed. Both were significantly adapted and updated and the new versions are now in use. Similarly the new Easter units for the diocesan scheme of work have been used this year and it is now planned to evaluate their impact and incorporate the outcome into next year's planning.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the leadership team share a whole-hearted commitment to the Catholic ethos of the school. The headteacher provides sound leadership and a clear vision for the development of Catholic life and religious education. She is aided by an active and effective governing body, a supportive parish priest and a dedicated staff. Therefore the school's capacity for further improvement is good, but the monitoring of Catholic life should be extended to evaluate quality and impact.

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

Outcomes for pupils are good across the school in terms of progress in RE. Baseline assessment shows that children generally enter school with very little faith knowledge or experience. Children, including those with special needs, make good progress in each key stage, and there is no significant difference in performance between boys and girls. Sampling activities show that work in RE is of a similar standard to that in English.

The school's commitment to its Catholic life is excellent. Its Catholic life and values are at the heart of all it does. They underpin the three simple school rules and the school's mission statement, 'Love one another as I have loved you,' with which all children are familiar and which are in evidence throughout the school. Pupils respond well to the opportunities afforded them for spiritual, moral and vocational development through religious, charitable and community activities.

Pupils' response to collective worship is good. They are reverent and attentive during Mass, assemblies and prayer services and are eager to participate fully. They are familiar with a variety of traditional prayers and have the opportunity to devise and read their own.

Most teaching is good or better. Class teachers have good subject knowledge and planning is monitored by the RE co-ordinator. There are opportunities for cross curricular and creative activities. Children report that they enjoy RE and their behaviour and attitude in class are excellent. Teachers monitor pupil progress throughout each lesson through questioning and peer and self-assessment. The school has also introduced a feedback marking policy, a set of child-friendly symbols which teachers use in marking and which pupils can interpret and respond to individually. Pupils' work is assessed in line with the diocesan assessment focus sheets. Assessment in RE has been identified as an area for development to bring it more into line with English and Maths.

The school judges its curriculum provision to be good. It is based on the Birmingham Archdiocese Curriculum Strategy, '*Learning and Growing as the People of God*,' and uses the planning and assessment guidance from the document. This programme of work is enhanced by a variety of additional activities such as visits to St Chad's and Coventry Cathedral and participation in various diocesan events in collaboration with other Catholic schools. There is very good provision for family life and sex education teaching and a multi-faith programme for children across the school. So that all children are able to make good progress in their learning, teaching assistants are deployed effectively to provide additional support for those with particular learning difficulties as well as other pupils.

## Recommendations

Incorporate the *National Levels of Attainment in Religious Education* into the school's RE monitoring and assessment programme

Develop formal processes for evaluating the quality and the impact on pupils of the school's Catholic life

Develop formal processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning in RE

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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.



Diocesan Education Service,  
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Coleshill,  
B46 3EA

July 2012

Dear Parents and Carers

**Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School, 14-15 June 2012**

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.

The school is a very good Catholic school where your children are taught and cared for in an active community of faith, where they feel happy and secure. Catholic life and values are at the heart of all it does. They underpin the three simple school rules and the school's mission statement, 'Love one another as I have loved you,' with which all children are familiar

Teaching of religious education is good and pupils enjoy their lessons and work with enthusiasm. Children of all abilities are well supported in class and make good progress and achieve well. Behaviour in class and around the school is excellent.

The headteacher, staff, governing body and parish priest are all committed to developing the Catholic life and religious education of the school. Their judgements about the provision they make and the standards and progress of the pupils are reliable and accurate. This provides a good basis for future planning.

To help them do this I have recommended that they should continue to expand the school's monitoring of children's learning; they should also develop ways to review the quality of Catholic life and how it impacts on the children.

I very much enjoyed working with the staff and children and would like to thank everyone for their warm welcome. The children were friendly and helpful and a credit to their school and families.

Yours sincerely

Denis Cody  
Diocesan Inspector