

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 3 RE lessons, including 2 with the headteacher. In addition the inspector completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time. She held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, and parish priest. She observed an 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. She looked at a range of evidence related to the school's self evaluation such as RAISEonline, the school development plan, the subject action plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals. Alongside the validation of school self evaluation, the inspector gathered evidence about assessment evidence which will be shared with other diocesan schools.

Information about the school

Our Lady's is a smaller than average Catholic primary school serving the parish of St Anne, Wappenbury and covering 18 villages. The number of Catholic pupils is currently 62%. The large proportion of pupils is of white British heritage. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The numbers of pupils with special needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of educational needs is average. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with the national average overall.

Main Finding

Self evaluation at Our Lady's accurately judges itself to be a good Catholic school. It is unmistakably a Catholic school. The mission of the school, "Our Lady's School embraces the uniqueness of each child through God's message of love," underpins all they do. This is truly a child centred school where they nurture children well and seek to support all the families in their endeavours to bring up their children as the followers of Christ. Pupils are proud of their school. They work hard and work and play harmoniously together. The governing body have been pro-active in recruiting foundation governors and these are developing well in their role as governors of a Catholic school. The school judges that its Catholic life is good. Inspection found that Catholic life is a strength of the school. Collective worship is outstanding. Religious education is correctly considered to be good. Pupils enjoy their RE. Behaviour is very good and pupils feel happy, safe and secure within a vibrant Catholic ethos. All work in RE is regularly evaluated and reviewed and actions towards improvement taken. There is total commitment to the Catholic ethos of the school by the whole school community.

School self evaluation

The school's processes of self evaluation are thoughtful and thorough. The evaluation of Catholic life underestimates the excellent provision made for the pupils. School evaluation reflects the overall quality of leadership within the school which is clearly marked by the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and her deputy and their dedication to the Catholic mission of the school and religious education. Audits have been undertaken on various aspects of Catholic life and pupil participation to explore the spiritual life within the school. The results are analysed and action taken.

An interesting outcome is that the older pupils make their own choice at Mass whether they go for a blessing and those who have made their First Communion go up for Holy Communion in their own time. There is a sense of maturity about the choices made. Informal discussions with the governors on the Catholic life of the school take place. There is limited formal reporting on Catholic life.

Monitoring and evaluation in RE are carried out as part of the school's regular cycle, with teaching observed in each class. The accurate assessment of teaching and learning as good overall was established after observations of teaching RE in all classes, learning walks, planning and assessment scrutiny, monitoring of the pupils' books and pupil interviews over a period of time. Lesson observations are positive in their support and give clear indications of how to improve children's learning. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and after a rapid improvement in learning when pupils enter the Reception Year there is generally a consistency of progress in learning over the years. Teachers' questioning is good. Teaching develops pupils' thinking skills. Able pupils in particular in Year 5 and 6 are encouraged to develop their understanding and work at above expectations for their age. Many pupils display keen enquiry skills and openly engage in discussion. Throughout the school support is also given to pupils by capable teaching assistants. New and non-Catholic staff are well supported to deliver the RE curriculum. Behaviour is very good which enables pupils to be interested and learn well.

The school accurately judges the curriculum to be good. Within the curriculum the school initiates projects that stimulate pupils' interests and pose moral dilemmas. Pupils are encouraged to have respect for other beliefs and cultures and some work on other faiths is included. The curriculum is well focused and regularly reviewed. There are informal links with some other subjects, history, geography, music, drama, literacy and science encouraging pupils to appreciate God's wonderful world. Some opportunities are taken for extended writing in RE. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply about the hardships faced by people less fortunate than themselves. There are clear links between the curriculum and the very good charity work enthusiastically undertaken by the pupils.

Differing types of assessment are regular and of high quality. This has produced a very clear picture of the learning of all pupils in RE within the school. The use of ICT in RE by pupils observed is limited.

In view of the quality of the school self evaluation and the clear plans for future improvement based on findings, the capacity for improvement in both Catholic life and religious education are good. Governors are in agreement with the school's evaluation of Catholic life and RE. They have an understanding of the challenges the school faces.

Overall effectiveness of the school¹

Outcomes for the pupils in RE are good across the school. Most pupils enter school at a very early developmental stage in their Catholic knowledge. On entry to the school pupils acquire knowledge appropriate to their age quickly making very good progress. They soon absorb the expectations of prayer and the Catholic life within the school. The school works to achieve a consistency of learning throughout and most pupils make at least good progress. In Year 2 it is found that a large majority of pupils achieve average or above levels of attainment. In Year 6 pupils have

¹ 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.

continued to make good progress with a higher proportion achieving average or above levels. Those pupils with special needs and/or disabilities also achieve well. They are well supported and understand the focus of RE lessons. Written work in RE corresponds with the standards in literacy. The monitoring is carefully analysed to show how individuals and different groups achieve.

Due to the outstanding Catholic ethos and pastoral care pupils acquire attitudes and values that are good. Spiritual, moral and vocational development is very good. There are clear behavioural expectations linked to the teaching of Jesus. Pupils learn to care for one another and to understand the importance of forgiveness in relationships. Pupils are valued and respected. There is a strong "family" bond within the school. Collective worship is inspirational. Pupils respond well to the differing forms of prayer, sing and play their instruments well. Pupils are confident to be involved in spontaneous prayer whether at a whole school assembly or at Mass with members of the school's wider community present. Pupils pray well and the prayers they write themselves are often heartfelt. Pupils from a young age are capable of thinking about the poor or sad, people affected by war, disaster and personal difficulties and including them in their prayers.

Provision is good overall. Planning over a 2 year cycle is effective and adjusted to meet the needs of the various groups of pupils, whether by provision of different tasks or through the support of teaching assistants. Cross-curricular themes promote Catholic values, ethos and a clear sense of vocation. The assessment processes are well considered. Some marking is outstanding but for most teachers' marking is positive and is developing to give guidance for improvement in pupils' RE knowledge and understanding. The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils and the school is working to further develop the teaching of other faiths. The school encourages pupils to respect the lives, cultures and beliefs of others in the school and beyond the school community.

Recommendations

- Further develop opportunities for the study of other faiths
- Ensure there is formal reporting to governors of Catholic life of the school as well as the teaching and learning in RE.



Diocesan Education Service,
Don Bosco House,
Coventry Road,
Coleshill.
B46 3EA

14th May 2012

Dear Parents and Carers

**Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of Our Lady's Catholic Primary School,
Princethorpe, May 8th - 9th 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 has an outstanding Catholic ethos where the pastoral care of your children is truly child centred. The Catholic mission underpins all that the school does. The children make good progress in their religious education. The pupils are proud of the school, they enjoy their learning in religious education and take an active part in the Masses and liturgies whether it is in doing a reading, prayer, singing or playing instruments. Children work and play happily together. The teachers encourage the children to behave well both in class and around the school. They are polite and most welcoming. The teachers regularly review the teaching and what is learned in RE together with the Catholic life of the school to ensure that your children receive the best possible religious education they can in an environment where all are respected.

I have recommended that the teachers formally report their findings to governors on the Catholic life of the school as well as the teaching and learning in RE. Your children are encouraged to have respect for other beliefs and cultures. I am recommending that the school develops this work even further in order that your children can learn more about the other faiths.

It was a privilege and pleasure to inspect this delightful school in rural Warwickshire. The children and staff made me feel most welcome. The children are a credit to the school, to their families and those who care for them.

Yours sincerely

Teresa Quick
Diocesan Inspector