



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## Section 48 Inspection Report

### ST JAMES CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Part of the Lumen Christi Multi-Academy Company  
Leach Heath Lane, Rednal, Birmingham, B45 9BN

Inspection dates:

8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Lead Inspector:

Mark Hinton

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#### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:

#### OUTSTANDING

Catholic Life:

Outstanding

Religious Education:

Outstanding

Collective Worship:

Outstanding

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*Overall effectiveness at previous inspection:*

*Outstanding*

#### SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is an Outstanding Catholic school because:

- The school's mission, 'In the loving peace, justice and joy of Jesus, we achieve,' is at the heart of its daily life and is understood and put into practice by everyone in the community. This is because leaders and governors have a deep understanding of the importance of the school's mission. They regularly review and affirm the mission statement, to ensure that St James truly is a school where the peace, justice and joy of Christ are shared abundantly.
- The school's Catholic life is vibrant, rich and purposeful. Leaders take great care to ensure that the school's Catholic Life is relevant and engaging to all pupils and they are innovative in their approach.
- The principal is dedicated to continually improving and refining the Catholic Life of the school. She takes great care to ensure the provision for Catholic life enables pupils and indeed the entire community to put their faith into action. She is reflective and carefully analyses the provision for Catholic Life, constantly seeking ways to provide new and often challenging opportunities for pupils to truly put their faith into action.
- Religious Education is carefully led by the vice principal. He monitors and evaluates the provision and has a strong knowledge of the quality of provision in each year group. He works closely with teachers and teaching assistants to constantly improve the provision for Religious Education and is highly effective in his role.

- Pupils' knowledge and understanding in Religious Education is of a very high standard. This is because teachers and teaching assistants combine strong subject knowledge, high expectations of pupils and creative approaches to teaching and learning. As a result, pupils are highly motivated and engaged and thoroughly enjoy their Religious Education lessons.
- High expectations and challenge are a feature of Religious Education at St James. This strong practice is supported by teachers' use of a dynamic range of approaches to Religious Education that invoke thoughtful, spiritual and reflective responses from the pupils.
- The range of opportunities for Collective Worship is extensive. In Masses and assemblies pupils listen with great reverence and attentiveness and readily respond with great thought and care. They sing joyfully and enthusiastically, which contributes to the uplifting and inspiring experience provided by the school's Collective Worship.
- There are a wide range of engaging approaches to Collective Worship. Pupils have regular, purposeful opportunities to plan, organise and lead their own acts of worship. Extremely innovative use of the local area is made to bring an added spiritual dimension to pupil-led worship.

## FULL REPORT

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of pupils' written work so that it matches the exceptionally high level of their discussion work.
- Refine monitoring processes further, so that they are even more effective in identifying areas for improvement.

## THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school.	<b>Outstanding</b>
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
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.	Outstanding

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

#### The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

- The bedrock of the school is its mission statement, which is lived out purposefully by everyone in the community. This is because leaders and governors ensure it is regularly reviewed by all stakeholders and they ensure it is relevant and meaningful for the pupils. As a result, everyone in the community at St James, whether they are leaders, governors, pupils, parents or volunteers has a deep and practical understanding of what the school's mission is and how they contribute to it.
- Pupils make a valuable contribution to the school's Catholic Life through their thoughtful evaluations. They have the opportunity to undertake audits, complete surveys, interview their peers and monitor aspects of the school's Catholic Life. The Liturgy Group is a group of pupils who take the lead in evaluating the provision and

helping to make further improvements. Their evaluations are carefully analysed by leaders and governors and make a purposeful contribution to improvement plans.

- Pupils are involved in the leadership of initiatives within the school that recognise, reward and celebrate the positive contributions made by their peers to the Catholic Life of the school. 'Purple Points' are awarded in the seasons of Lent and Advent to recognise pupils who live out the schools mission statement and the values of the liturgical season. The Liturgy Group of pupil leaders monitor the points awarded to each pupil in each class and select pupils for special recognition awards for being shining examples to others. Similarly the 'Leaders in Faith' awards scheme is assessed by the Liturgy Group. Pupils can achieve the bronze, silver and gold standards of this scheme which rewards their contributions to the school's prayer life, Catholic Life and recognises their growing religious knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary throughout the school. Guided by the mission statement, relationships at St James are respectful and trusting. Pupils are treated with the highest levels of care and respect and they reciprocate this to their teachers and teaching assistants. There is a strong emphasis on following the example and teachings of Jesus and a culture of kindness and respect is evident to all who enter the school.
- The staff set a very positive example to the pupils. From the principal and vice principal through the teachers and teaching assistants to the office staff, lunchtime staff and site staff – everyone is respectful, dedicated, calm, kind and helpful. This warm, Catholic family culture has a positive impact on pupils who respond by embracing the positive example they are set. Parents told inspectors how much they value the Catholic family ethos of the school and commended the example set by the staff. Pupils are set a strong moral example in both formal and informal settings and as such they have an excellent understanding of right and wrong, informed by the teachings of Christ.
- The staff have a strong commitment to the Catholic Life of the school. They participate enthusiastically in staff prayer and Collective Worship, with teachers and teaching assistants taking the lead in delivering these acts. The strong provision for continuing professional development is evident in the way all staff embrace, respect, understand and promote the Catholic Life of the school.
- The school effectively promotes a strong culture of vocation – for example pupils are asked to think deeply about the 'type' of person they are now and will become in the future – as well as the 'role' they might fulfil now and in the future as workers for God's kingdom. As a result, pupils have a strong and well-formed understanding of vocation and both 'who' and 'what' God is calling them to be. The pupils spoke confidently about how they can bring others closer to Jesus through their kindness and generosity and understand how they are called by God to do this.
- The parish priest is the school chaplain and makes an extremely positive contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. He is widely respected and appreciated by everyone in the community and the leaders, governors, staff and pupils enjoy a very effective relationship with him. The pupils have clear respect for him and they know that, 'Father helps them become closer to Jesus'. Leaders and governors benefit greatly from his input. For example, leaders recently introduced the concept of themes to the Catholic Life of the school, such as 'adoration', 'seeing is believing – believing is seeing', 'rosary' and 'Epiphany'. The parish priest worked with the leaders to align these themes to the Sunday and weekday Gospels, wherever possible, and to ensure the themes of the school were reflected in the parish as well.
- Pupils are involved with the parish through the work of the three parishes coordinator who provides a powerful link between the parish and the school – they

made a pilgrimage with other local parishes to the Diocesan shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Hednesford at the start of the year. The Mini Vinnies group work together with the St Vincent de Paul (SVP) group in the parish to undertake charitable works such as supporting the B30 local food bank. Groups of pupils have supported the local 'soup run' for the homeless and regularly visit a homeless shelter in Birmingham city centre to donate food, toiletries and clothing. The pupils recognise these actions as being practical examples of responding both to the calling of Jesus and living out the mission of their school.

- The quality of pastoral care is a strength of the school that is praised by parents. Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils well and they know how to access support for pupils when they need it.
- The school has completed a Relationships and Sex Education audit and supplemented the Diocesan 'All that I Am' scheme with a published scheme that addresses the requirements of the audit.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual development is enhanced by the quality of the Catholic environment at the school. Beautiful, engaging displays featuring religious themes, vocational questions and the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile values abound throughout the school. The school grounds are used to excellent effect as a place of spirituality and this has been greatly enhanced by the recently opened prayer garden. Regular prayer and worship visits to local beauty spots for all pupils are a feature of the provision for spiritual development.

### **How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school.**

- Leaders and governors demonstrate very high levels of commitment to the Catholic Life of the school. The principal takes the overall leading role in the development of Catholic Life and she reports to the Catholic Life committee of the governing body. Governors support the monitoring and evaluation process at a strategic level, whilst also taking the opportunity to visit the school to experience the quality of the provision for themselves. Governors have a very clear understanding of how their strategic role supports the operational work of the school and, as a result, are able to provide both challenge and support in an entirely appropriate and effective way.
- A range of systems are used to monitor and evaluate the Catholic Life of the school. Leaders regularly evaluate the impact of the school's Catholic Life upon the pupils and report their findings to the Catholic Life Committee. Questionnaires, scrutiny of work in books, audits of prayer, spirituality and vocations provision, together with pupil interviews, all inform this process. The principal analyses the findings in great detail before sharing any changes, modifications or affirmations of good practice with the governors.
- Searching self-evaluation is a strength of the school and the principal provides very detailed analysis of this to the governors. They work together to ensure there is clear impact upon the provision for Catholic Life as a result of monitoring and evaluation. A strong example of this is evident in the principal's drive to constantly innovate and find new ways to provide pupils with the opportunity to put their faith into action. New initiatives are never at the expense of current good practice and the principal, supported by the governors, has ensured that the school's Catholic Life is constantly evolving and growing, whilst building on existing strong foundations.
- The principal, supported by the vice principal and other staff, ensures that new staff are very carefully inducted into the family of St James. Strong guidance and support is provided in every aspect of the Catholic Life of the school in order to ensure that new staff can quickly make the best contribution possible. A very hands

on approach is taken to this induction with high levels of personal support provided to new staff. Leaders have a robust understanding of the development needs of all staff and ensure that all teachers and teaching assistants are set Catholic Life targets in the annual appraisal cycle.

- Leaders are working closely with other local Catholic schools and the multi academy company to review the entire curriculum. They are working to design a curriculum from a Catholic perspective. Leaders understand that the school's Catholic Life extends to every aspect of school organisation and proactively respond to challenges, whilst keeping the Catholic Life of the school firmly at its heart.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection were unanimously positive about the school's provision for Catholic Life. They thoroughly appreciate the many and varied opportunities they have to be involved in Masses and assemblies, as well as other events such as prayer services and class Collective Worship. Parents spoke very positively about the quality of sacramental preparation. They were very positive about the moral education their children receive and the quality of Catholic education provided at the school. One parent told inspectors, 'as soon as we walked into this school we knew it was a happy and positive Catholic school,' whilst another said, 'there are always new things to involve us – for example I'm looking forward to using the new prayer garden with my children.'
- The governors make a very significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. Members of the Catholic Life Committee meet regularly to discuss the analysis of the school's monitoring and evaluation. They work closely with leaders to implement new initiatives and embed best practice. A feature of the work of the Catholic Life Committee is their regular interaction with pupils. Members of the committee spoke to inspectors knowledgeably about what pupils most enjoy about the Catholic Life of the school and what they would like to see improved. The governors are committed to the school's Catholic Life and sacrifice a lot of their time in order to work very closely and supportively with leaders, staff and pupils.
- Leaders treat their relationship with the parish with great respect and care and this successful partnership, supported by the parish priest and the three parishes coordinator makes a vibrant connection between the school and parish. In particular, the school's close relationship with its sister school within the parish has contributed to a sense of unity and shared vision for the entire parish, which benefits the pupils in both parish schools.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of Religious Education.	<b>Outstanding</b>
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	Outstanding
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.	Outstanding

### **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.**

- Pupils make strong progress from their starting point in Reception Class and continue to progress throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. There are no significant differences in the progress rates of any groups of pupils and all of the

pupils make similarly strong progress. This is as a result of leaders and teachers carefully checking on pupils' progress and intervening where necessary to provide appropriate support.

- Pupils throughout the school have a very strong knowledge of Bible stories and the teachings of Christ. They have a similarly strong ability to communicate their learning from the Bible and Christ's teachings. This is as a result of teachers' very strong subject knowledge that is skilfully combined throughout the school with a range of teaching strategies to make learning in Religious Education relevant, engaging and immersive.
- The standard of learning and teaching in Religious Education is consistently high throughout the school. Teachers and teaching assistants use a vast array of strategies to help the pupils learn. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils quickly became emotionally connected with the Gospel account of the appearance of Christ to the disciples after the resurrection and showed great empathy and emotional understanding. They made connections to their own and others' experiences of loss because the teacher made strong connections between the Gospel and personal experiences. This honest and heartfelt modelling was inspirational to the pupils and invoked similarly heartfelt responses amongst them. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were set the challenging task of assuming roles in a debate about whether we should believe the resurrection happened and the reasons why we might or might not believe. This challenging task was successfully and sensitively completed by the pupils because the teachers carefully modelled what to do and paused the lesson regularly to consider the points being made by the two groups who had assumed roles with differing viewpoints.
- Lessons are always highly engaging. A Key Stage 1 pupil explained that Religious Education was one of their, 'most favourite lessons because there's always something new to think about.' On occasions there is a slight imbalance between the proportion of the lesson spent on group discussion and the proportion spent on independent work, which can lead to some pupils losing concentration, albeit momentarily. Nonetheless, pupils' behaviour and engagement is consistently strong throughout the school.
- Strong subject knowledge from teachers and teaching assistants is a feature of Religious Education at St James. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher made strong connections to pupils' prior learning about Thomas' transition from doubter to believer and made use of a drama tool to help the pupils think deeply about Thomas' emotions and thought processes. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils showed a very strong knowledge and understanding of the Gospel of Mary's discovery of the empty tomb and also the Last Supper. The teacher provided pupils with key vocabulary and explained this carefully so they could access the texts. Well planned questioning, linked to pupils' different abilities, enabled pupils to empathise with Mary, Jesus and the disciples and make connections to their own experiences.
- As a result of the combination of strong subject knowledge and teacher's use of a range of strategies, pupils are highly engaged and motivated to do their very best in Religious Education lessons. The quality of their discussion work is exceptional and demonstrates their strong knowledge, understanding and increasingly competent religious vocabulary. On occasions, the standard of pupils' written work is not quite as well developed as their oral work. Nevertheless, pupils' attainment in Religious Education is consistently high throughout the school. There are no significant differences in standards of attainment between different groups.
- Careful observation and questioning in lessons helps teachers to move pupils learning forward at a fast pace. In a Reception Class lesson, the teacher and teaching assistant worked in strong collaboration together to ask the children questions that connected them to the previous lesson. Their extended use of



increasingly challenging questions enabled the pupils to quickly recall the resurrection story they had been learning about.

- Teaching assistants have high levels of subject knowledge and are very involved in the delivery of Religious Education lessons. They make consistently strong contributions to lessons throughout the school and teachers plan for their input very effectively. As a result, pupils of all abilities are able to access the Religious Education curriculum. With the support of teachers and teaching assistants within lessons, they quickly grasp new concepts, engage personally and make connections between the teachings of Christ and their own lives.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils work and they are very skilled at providing feedback to pupils. Feedback is almost always developmental and focused on the Religious Education objectives being taught. Pupils told inspectors that feedback from teachers helps them know exactly how to improve their work.

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

- Leaders and Governors ensure that Religious Education has at least full parity with other curriculum subjects and meets the requirements of the Bishop's Conference. Religious Education is allocated at least 10% of curriculum time overall.
- Religious Education is led by the vice principal who treats this aspect of his role with the highest regard. Staff and pupils alike know he is there to actively support them with the Religious Education curriculum. Through his monitoring and evaluation work he has a robust grasp of the quality of provision and relative strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning. He works closely with the principal to formulate well thought out action plans to continually improve the provision for Religious Education.
- Leaders and governors have rigorous and effective systems for monitoring the quality of Religious Education. Leaders work closely with the relevant committee of the governing body in a spirit of openness with challenge and support provided by the governors in an appropriately equal measure. The work of leaders includes scrutiny of teachers' planning, work scrutiny, lesson observations, curriculum audits, pupil and parental questionnaires and pupil interviews. All monitoring activities take place regularly and are planned for on an annual basis.
- Whilst monitoring systems are rigorous, there is scope for them to be refined even more so that they identify areas for improvement even more efficiently. This would be particularly helpful in supporting the school to match the already high quality of pupils' written work to the exceptional standard of their discussion work.
- A key strength of Religious Education leadership at St James is the rigour and usefulness of the evaluation and analysis undertaken by the vice principal who is the subject leader, together with the principal. Monitoring outcomes are carefully evaluated by the vice principal before being analysed with the principal. Once this careful and detailed analysis has taken place, useful and relevant improvement actions are identified. These actions are then presented to the relevant committee of the governing body, who skilfully challenge the leaders in a supportive and appropriate way.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is planned to meet the needs of pupils through formal assessment and moderation procedures, both within school and across the Lumen Christi Multi Academy Company. The vice principal regularly collects and collates teachers' formal assessments of pupils' works and organises and supervises moderation meetings. This process ensures that teachers have an accurate understanding of pupils' attainment. In turn, teachers are supported to address any gaps in pupils' learning so that their progress continues to

improve. Teachers also make very effective use of assessment for learning within and between lessons, they adapt their planning to provide extra challenge or support for pupils as necessary. Teaching Assistants are planned for in a thoughtful and efficient way that ensures pupils' individual needs are met.

- The governor's committee responsible for Religious Education is a very effective group. They spend a great deal of time working with leaders to ensure that new ideas and initiatives are well planned and conceived. They support leaders in their evaluation of outcomes and undertake regular visits into school to see first-hand the impact of the decisions they have made. Leaders, rightly, feel very well supported by this committee. The balance of support and challenge is very effective and leads to very strong outcomes in Religious Education for pupils at St James.
- Leaders engage fully with other Catholic schools for the benefit of the wider Catholic community. The vice principal is the primary Religious Education leader for the Multi Academy Company and three other neighbouring Catholic schools. This is an example of the leaders and governors' commitment to engaging with and sharing with others for the greater good.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality of Collective Worship.	<b>Outstanding</b>
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	Outstanding
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.	Outstanding

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

#### The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.

- The provision of a wide range of opportunities for Collective Worship is a strength of the school. The entire programme of Collective Worship is planned in line with both the school and parish 'theme' of the season and the values promoted by the Catholic Schools Pupil Profile each half term. This careful and methodical planning results in consistently high levels of engagement and impact across the school.
- Pupils show extremely high levels of reverence and respect for all acts of Collective Worship. A calm, respectful atmosphere was evident in all acts of worship during the inspection, whether whole school, small group, adult or pupil led. This is because the school staff carefully model the highest standards of behaviour and conduct. They also ensure that all acts of worship are engaging and relevant to pupils.
- In the Gospel assembly, led by the principal, pupils were totally engaged and readily showed how they could learn from Jesus and apply his teachings to their own lives. The assembly was creatively organised in terms of the informal seating arrangements used, where pupils clustered around a central circle of pupils, who were role playing aspects of the Gospel. The principal led with calm authority and all of the pupils listened attentively. Combined with the pupils' enthusiastic singing, the assembly was both joyful and uplifting.
- Similarly, in whole school Mass, the pupils' levels of respect, reverence and engagement were very high. Careful planning and preparation of the Mass ensured very high levels of pupil involvement and contributed greatly to the spiritual impact



of the Mass upon the children and adults alike. Without any prompting, pupils naturally processed across the playground in an extremely quiet and respectful manner – teachers and teaching assistants supported this respectful atmosphere. This is another way that staff set a good example for the pupils. Pupils read a detailed and thoughtful introduction to the Mass, which enabled everyone to become connected with the readings and the 'theme' of Easter, which was expressed as 'seeing is believing, believing is seeing'

- Pupils sang joyfully and enthusiastically during Mass and listened with great respect and interest to the parish priest. They quickly answered questions and demonstrated how well they could apply the Gospel message to their own lives and for the good of others. At all points of the Mass, opportunities were taken to ensure the pupils were engaged as much as possible, for example by using sign language to accompany the sung version of the Hail Mary. The pupils' confident singing was enhanced by the beautiful piano music played by a member of the local community. After Mass, the pupils' very high level of respect and care for the parish priest was evident as he took the time to speak to every child as they processed out of the Church.
- A vast range of other opportunities for Collective Worship are also provided at St James. Pupils regularly plan, organise and lead acts of worship for their peers. During the inspection, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils led Collective Worship for their classes. This is a creative partnership between the two classes because, earlier in the year, the older pupils act as mentors to the younger pupils and help them learn more about organising and leading Collective Worship. This support has clearly been very effective because the pupil led collective worship was extremely uplifting and inspirational. The high levels of expectation from teachers and teaching assistants in both Year 3 and Year 4 were evidenced by the maturity and attentiveness of all pupils. The thoughtful use of pupil self-evaluation improved aspects of the worship after listening to their peers by saying 'they told us they needed more time to think about the readings, so we have allowed more time now.'
- As well as pupil led worship between classes, the school takes pupils for acts of retreat and worship at beauty spots in the local environment. Pupils are guided to experience the sensory elements of the local area and given time to reflect and absorb the beauty and peace around them. Prayer and scripture, together with meditation and reflection have a very profound and spiritually uplifting impact on adults and pupils. One pupil said, 'I felt close to God at the top of the hill because when I looked down from the hill, I saw all of God's creation.'
- These off site worship opportunities are carefully planned for and even the very youngest pupils have regular opportunities to participate. They are the result of the deep thought that goes into the Collective Worship provision and the principal's determination to constantly find new ways of making faith relevant and inspirational for everyone.
- The recently opened prayer garden is another example of the school's innovative practice. Great care has been taken to ensure the garden is universally accessible so that the entire school and parish community can make use of it. For example, the May Procession in the church flows into the prayer garden of the school where a statue of Our Lady has been installed.
- Even though the prayer garden is only recently opened, it has quickly become a popular and well used feature of the school, with pupils and parents commenting on how they use it. As a result of careful strategic planning, a dedicated member of staff takes responsibility for engaging the pupils with the prayer garden at lunchtimes. A wide range of creative approaches to prayer are provided on a daily basis. For example, some pupils were weaving to help them focus whilst praying for equality, other pupils were planting marigolds around the statue of Our Lady, whilst

others were blowing bubbles around the garden as visual representations of each prayer they were offering. The pupils enthusiastically spoke about how their ideas to create a 'hut of hope' had been embraced by the staff and reached fruition. Vast numbers of pupils want to use the prayer garden every day and the school has successfully provided a beautiful, sacred space that can be used by pupils, parents, staff and parishioners.

- Opportunities for adults to participate in and lead Collective Worship are plentiful and contribute, in turn, to the example the pupils are set. Parents welcome the opportunities they have to take part in a wide range of acts of worship and are particularly proud of the new prayer garden. Staff-led Collective Worship and prayer happens every week and is led by teachers, teaching assistants and leaders.

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

- Leaders have a very strong and constantly developing knowledge of how to plan and deliver inspirational acts of Collective Worship. The leadership team researches new ideas and approaches and then implements and models these to the whole community. This results in both adults and pupils responding to the example she sets by incorporating some of the approaches in their own leadership of worship.
- The parish and school initiative of 'theming' Collective Worship around the Gospels of the season is very successful in ensuring that pupils develop a very strong understanding of the liturgical year. In addition, this approach provides significant opportunities for the continuing professional development of staff, who improve their knowledge and understanding of liturgical seasons and traditions through the themes. This approach benefits from the input of both the parish priest and the three parishes coordinator. It is an example of how leaders have embraced working with the parish to develop the pupils' knowledge of the liturgical year.
- The school's provision for Collective Worship is constantly expanding and improving. This is as a result of meticulous monitoring and evaluation, which involves the whole community. Leaders monitor and evaluate the provision and provide developmental feedback to pupils. Governors undertake regular visits to the school and provide appropriate feedback and challenge. Teachers and teaching assistants undertake peer monitoring and provide feedback and support to improve the provision. Pupils also monitor and evaluate the provision and provide feedback and recommendations, both to each other and to adults who lead worship.
- Monitoring and evaluation is highly effective, not just because it is undertaken by a wide range of stakeholders, but also because of the array of techniques and tools used to scrutinise the provision. Masses and assemblies are reviewed by adults and pupils alike and critical evaluations are fed back to leaders and staff. All staff complete audits of Collective Worship provision and provide these to their colleagues and leaders. The relevant committee of the governing body identifies strengths and weaknesses in the provision and actively seeks out the views of parents and pupils. No stone is left unturned in the rigorous monitoring of worship at St James.
- Leaders undertake detailed analysis of the wealth of monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship and present this to governors. Together with the leaders, governors carefully and strategically plan how to continually improve the school's provision. This effective partnership between leaders and governors, together with the meticulous evaluation of all monitoring activities, leads to ever evolving and improving Collective Worship.

- Leaders and governors have determinedly provided pupils with a wide range of opportunities to plan, organise and lead their own acts of worship. As a result, pupils are very confident.
- Regular and effective continuing professional development means all teachers and teaching assistants are confident leaders of Collective Worship. They pass on the knowledge and skills needed for pupils to be able to plan, organise and lead their own acts of worship. Leaders have a very accurate grasp of the development needs of staff and work with other schools and the multi academy company to signpost good practice and organise useful staff training.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	<b>141820</b>
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	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	210
Appropriate authority	The board of directors
Chair	Canon David Evans
Headteacher	Angela Backen
Telephone number	0121 464 9700
Website address	<a href="http://www.stjamescatholicprimary.co.uk">www.stjamescatholicprimary.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiry@stjamescatholicprimary.co.uk">enquiry@stjamescatholicprimary.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL**

- St James is a one form entry Catholic primary school serving the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour in Rednal, Birmingham.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 85%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is above against the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is below the national average.
- Attainment on entry in Religious Education is low.
- Since the last inspection the school has become an academy and a new subject leader for Religious Education has been appointed.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION**

- The inspection was carried out by two diocesan inspectors, Mark Hinton and Paul Nutt.
- 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 seven 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 Religious Education teaching on their learning over time and their experience of Collective Worship.
- Meetings were held with the chair of governors, a group of governors, the principal, the Religious Education subject leader and the parish priest.
- The inspectors attended a whole school Mass, class Collective Worship, pupil led Collective Worship, a Gospel assembly led by the principal and offsite Collective Worship in a local beauty spot. They scrutinised the presentation of the Catholic Life of the school, Collective Worship records and observed pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, Ofsted Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR) data, the school development plan, the Religious Education action plan, teachers' planning and learning journals.