



November 2015

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

Mr M Aldred
Headteacher
St Margaret Mary Catholic Primary School
Perry Common Road
Erdington
Birmingham
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Dear Mr Aldred,

Section 48 Monitoring inspection: St Margaret Mary Catholic Primary School

Thank you for the welcome you, your staff and pupils gave to me when I inspected your school on 4th November and for the information you provided both before and during the inspection. I am grateful for the time given by all including the parish priest in speaking with me.

The inspection was a “light touch” monitoring inspection because your school was judged at the last section 48 inspection to be an outstanding school and because it is now five years since you last received a diocesan inspection.

The purpose of the inspection was to assess the quality of the school’s self-evaluation and improvement planning for Catholic life and religious education. In order to make this judgement I read school documents, including a summative self-evaluation, RE development planning, interviewed senior leaders and the subject leader for RE, governor representatives, pupils, parents, observed 2 full RE lessons, an 'inspire workshop', a whole school Mass and looked at samples of pupils’ written work.

Catholic Life

St Margaret Mary School provides an outstanding Catholic education for all pupils. Outcomes from school self-evaluation present unequivocal and explicit evidence to support this judgement as accurate and fully justified.

The school leadership perceives self-evaluation as implicit in the drive towards a continuous momentum of school improvement. A structured approach to monitoring and evaluation that involves the systematic application of a broad range of high quality processes that focus on input and outcomes for pupils, is embedded in the school culture. In view of their rigour and frequency they provide an accurate profile of quality assurance, in relation to Catholic life and RE provision.

The spiritual direction of the school strives to provide the best possible outcomes for all pupils, a vision shared by a dedicated staff team and supportive governors. The extremely effective whole school approach to monitoring and evaluating the 'every child matters' agenda, characterises the commitment of the school to addressing the principles of its mission, a mission which underpins the high quality of its Catholic life and outstanding Catholic ethos. As a consequence, the school has a strong Catholic identity where pupils are able to enjoy a stimulating learning programme enveloped within a climate of love, trust and security. The pupils are supported by vigilant and caring staff, who are excellent role models and recognise their responsibility to monitor and guide pupils throughout the day, thus ensuring they aspire to the high expectations made of them.



School self evaluation of Catholic life enables staff, pupils, governors and parents to contribute through discussion and well structured questionnaires. All views are valued and serve to influence judgements and subsequent actions taken.

It is evident that the nourishment of pupil empowerment, relating to the Catholicity of the school, gives a broad insight into the development of their faith journey and has a very positive impact on promoting the excellent relationships observed during the inspection. A growing understanding of the importance of applying the Gospel teachings in daily lives is powerfully supported by a vibrant, pictorial collection of 'child friendly' messages, prominently displayed throughout the school, each one depicting how the practice of these values guide people closer to Jesus.

Governors are successful in promoting the Catholic life of the school and make significant contribution to the evaluation process. They are kept fully informed through the excellent liaison of the RE link governor and parish priest with the RE subject leader and senior leadership. Catholic life is reviewed termly by the governor's education committee. Outcomes of monitoring and evaluation are considered and provide an informative insight of the strengths and areas for further development.

There is reliable evidence to support the judgement that collective worship is outstanding. Daily prayer and worship underpins the Catholic life of the school and is very well developed because of the highly effective measures that are in place to evaluate its quality and impact. The provision of and pupil response to collective worship is monitored by the headteacher, RE leader and all staff, formally and informally, through observation, review and voice of the pupil spiritual council. Prayer is an integral part of the school day and there are many opportunities for staff and pupils to pray together. Pupils are encouraged to lead and plan class worship. From Year 2 onwards, class liturgy leaders proudly take on this role. The children are guided by staff who go to great lengths in order to make these times of reflection special, by the effective use of music and visual resources to create a prayerful atmosphere. Each classroom has a prominent, high quality prayer focus.

The school leaders liaise closely with the parish priest who is a frequent presence in school and provides excellent support and guidance particularly with the planning of school and parish Masses and sacramental preparation. Children's work is displayed in church alongside work produced at Sunday liturgy groups. The parish prayer partner initiative, led by the RE link governor, is very successful also.

The school works hard to foster a close partnership with parents. For example: the excellent RE family 'inspire workshops' held for each class half termly, are well supported and are very effective in promoting the importance of family links within the Catholic life of the school.

Religious Education

School evaluation is accurate and reliable in its judgement that pupil progress and attainment in RE is outstanding. This judgement is reliably based upon a variety of formal processes, used by the senior leadership and subject leader to monitor RE provision and outcomes, in accordance with the whole school evaluation schedule. In view of their high quality and effectiveness, these well structured systems give accurate insight of the quality of RE provision and the impact of teaching and learning.

Monitoring records over time and a profile of the quality of teaching in RE as consistently effective, are confirmed by some outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. Each lesson was characterised by succinct development planning, clear learning objectives and interesting, well matched activities to engage all learners. Teachers have high expectations of the children and communicate their faith through their enthusiasm and sound subject knowledge. The children demonstrate an excellent work ethic, are eager to achieve and highly motivated by



the varied learning routes to which they are exposed. The consistently high quality of RE teaching clearly has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and progress.

All monitoring in RE is linked to school improvement priorities, is extremely well focussed and carried out through observations, book trawls, planning scrutiny, learning walks and pupil voice. Using diocesan guidance, the school has personalised an informative assessment system to ensure that pupil progress and attainment in RE are monitored accurately and that there is a clear correlation between teaching, the quality of pupils' work and data.

Evaluation of monitoring outcomes is carefully recorded by the well organised and effective RE leader and crucially they are shared and discussed with senior leaders and all stakeholders. An annual school improvement planning review day is set aside for this purpose. This system of regular review and self evaluation, ensures a continuing momentum of excellence that results in accurate planning and high quality outcomes for pupils.

St Margaret Mary School has embedded effective processes for monitoring and evaluating its Catholic life and religious education and has accurately identified areas for improvement to enhance and maintain its outstanding practices.

Yours sincerely

Dominic Collins
Diocesan Inspector