



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## Section 48 Inspection Report

### **ST AUGUSTINE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Avenue Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, B21 8ED

Inspection dates: 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> July 2018  
Lead Inspector: Rose Brookes

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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:* *Good*

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

- The totally dedicated headteacher leads Catholic Life with a passion, which is rooted in a Christian love for the pupils in her care.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. They are quick to appreciate everything, including the immense care that is provided by all school staff.
- Both pupils and staff know that they have a vocation to serve and respect each other.
- The school has invested a great deal in creating a beautiful environment, which greatly enhances the school's mission and Catholic identity.
- Teachers are inspirational. They are good role models who share their own vocations with the pupils. All the teachers had excellent Religious Education subject knowledge. This enables pupils to approach lessons with great interest, passion and enthusiasm.
- St Augustine's is a happy school where staff are continually developed spiritually, morally and professionally by the senior leaders and the parish priest.
- The pupils' spiritual council are responsible for leading assemblies. They voluntarily practise the skills needed in play times. They have learnt how to engage all the younger pupils' interest and inspire deep thought and heartfelt response through direct question and answer sessions.
- Music is a key ingredient in all school-based Collective Worship, communally in assemblies and retreats, as well as in classroom worship. The inclusion of music in worship for singing and listening to is strongly led by the deputy headteacher.

## FULL REPORT

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

- Ensure that all monitoring and evaluation of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship is formally recorded by all stakeholders. All actions, taken as a result of any evaluation of monitoring, need to be reviewed for their impact.
- To further share the responsibility for Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective worship amongst all leaders and governors.

### 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.	Good

### 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 quality of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- Almost all the pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. They show respect and consideration towards others in their daily lives around the school.
- Pupils actively lead and participate in the Catholic Life of the school in many ways. They annually review the school mission statement. In addition, they monitor the physical environment throughout the school, actively participate and lead initiatives in a variety of charitable work and serve others as young leaders, peer mediators, play buddies and as part of the spiritual council.
- All staff are fully committed to the mission of the school. They enthusiastically participate in school activities which reflect the Catholic Life and mission of the school. They are exemplary role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils.
- The school environment greatly enhances the school's mission and Catholic identity. There is a rich variety of different displays, many of which the pupils have made in a variety of media, depicting the virtues promoted in the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile (CSPP), different saints and the beauty of God's creation.
- Events in the lives of the community are treasured. For example, there is a beautiful prayer room decorated in remembrance of a deceased pupil. Pupils continually use this room for prayer.
- Pupils are proud of St Augustine's school and they love being part of this diverse community. They say they are well cared for, feel safe and are part of a big family.
- The behaviour of almost all pupils is exemplary at all times. They have an ability to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and be forgiven. They are quick to appreciate everything, including the immense care that is provided by all school staff. They know how to celebrate their success and congratulate others.
- The school and the parish priest work closely together to deliver a very good programme of sacramental preparation for First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

- Pupils willingly take a leading role in activities which promote the school's Catholic Life and mission, both within school and in the wider community. They are involved in many types of fundraising, some of which has been a response to school tragedies, for example, organising fundraising for breast cancer.
- Pupils also take the initiative and choose to support fundraising for local charities such as St Chad's Sanctuary, local food banks and Birmingham Children's Hospital.
- Pupils have an obvious love for learning and they demonstrate a readiness to learn about Jesus and to participate in planned activities with enthusiasm. They can articulate Gospel values and the virtues promoted through the CSPP and evidence how they and others in the school put them into action.
- The pupils are culturally very diverse and bring a richness of their own to the school. Gospel values and the CSPP virtues are reflected in the openness, trust, tolerance and respect that are key features of St Augustine's school community.
- Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. When interviewed pupils said that they recognised that, "although people have different beliefs, we are all part of God's creation and we deserve respect and understanding".
- Nearly all the pupils can identify the sort of person God is calling them to be and have an age appropriate understanding of vocation. They respond with enthusiasm to the excellent provision for spiritual, moral and vocational development. They undertake a wide range of roles and responsibilities willingly. These include class ambassadors, class prefects, house captains, members of young people's parliament and the spiritual council.
- At the beginning of each academic year pupils complete a vocation statement, which is placed in the front of their Religious Education books. This is revisited regularly throughout the year to deepen their understanding of the type of person God is calling them to be.
- All staff have a deep sense of vocation and they support each other as they strive to support not only the pupils but also their families. Examples of this can be seen in the way they have supported bereaved families in the school community. As a result, pupils and parents feel that they belong to a bigger family which cares for them.
- Provision for relationship and sex education is thorough and developed at an appropriate level for all pupils. It is consistent with the teaching of the Church. This enables pupils to explore feelings and emotions and how they impact on themselves and others.
- Pupils actively participate with enthusiasm in a variety of high quality religious experiences and retreats. Year 6 visit Min Y Don in Wales, Year 5 visit Alton Castle and Year 3 complete a pre-Holy Communion retreat led by the Sisters of Mercy at St Mary's Convent, Handsworth.

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

- The extremely dedicated headteacher, who leads Catholic Life with a passion that is rooted in a total love for the pupils in her care, has enabled the staff and governors to provide a very high standard of pastoral care for all the pupils and parents. As a result, staff and pupils live, work and learn in a faith filled Catholic environment where everyone feels the love of God.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the new Religious Education subject leader are deeply committed to the school's mission. They provide support and challenge in all aspects of Catholic Life.
- There is a need to further share the responsibility for Catholic Life and Collective worship amongst all leaders and governors.
- The Caritas Christi in Urbe group is a partnership of twelve primary and two

secondary schools, who have formalised a Catholic based network using their collective experiences to provide extensive support to staff and trainees. It also works to provide an enhanced curriculum for the pupils in each school.

- Through the school's involvement with Caritas Christi in Urbe there are many opportunities for staff and pupils to enhance the Catholic Life across the schools, for example, enabling pupils to collaborate and lead initiatives outside their school community, developing friendships and collegiate networks, sharing liturgies and retreat days and providing Religious Education training opportunities to develop the skills of staff and governors.
- Newly qualified teachers (NQTs) regularly meet with other NQTs from Caritas Christi in Urbe to share experiences and to receive quality training.
- St Augustine's is a happy school where staff are continually developed spiritually, morally and professionally by the senior leaders and the parish priest. After every Mass the parish priest gives a short homily or lesson on an element of the Catholic faith. Consequently, both staff and pupils have a very good knowledge of their faith.
- All staff have a Catholic Life performance management objective.
- The monitoring and evaluation of Catholic Life takes place through lesson observation, learning walks, book scrutinies and professional conversations with staff and pupils.
- All staff participate in the annual review of the Catholic Life audit and this is used to formulate the Catholic Life action plan and Religious Education action plan. Impact of actions are monitored and evaluated.
- Following recent monitoring, pupils' understanding of vocation was identified as an area that needed developing. This led to a number of actions being taken. Staff understanding of vocation was developed, pupils were taught to focus on who God was calling them to be, quality displays, which motivate and inform everyone, were put up and external speakers and retreats that focus on vocation were arranged. As a result, all pupils and staff have a very good, deeply embedded understanding about what discipleship and vocation means in their lives.
- Parents annually evaluate the Catholic Life of the school.
- Although governors regularly attend events promoting the Catholic Life and they discuss it at governor's meetings, they have not formally recorded evaluations of Catholic Life.
- One of the foundation governors has regularly recorded the monitoring of Catholic Life. This has been done very thoroughly and this governor has a very good knowledge of all areas of Catholic Life. However, this monitoring needs to be more evaluative and it needs to lead to school improvement.

## 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.**

- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding.

- The school has identified that pupils enter Reception class with very low levels of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith but by the end of foundation stage most are working at expected levels.
- The high quality of provision for Religious Education means that average attainment continues to be above age-related expectations for most pupils.
- By the end of both key stages, almost all groups of pupils make good progress and many pupils make outstanding progress.
- The school responds well to the high number of pupils who move in and out of the area. The parish priest informs new families about the school. This enables the school to have a very high percentage of Catholic pupils. The school provides targeted pastoral support and excellent support in Religious Education for new pupils. This enables them to settle quickly into St Augustine's school and parish community.
- The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language are very well supported. Teachers and other adults are very aware of their pupils' capabilities and of their prior learning and understanding and plan very effectively to build on these. By the end of Year 6, attainment is at least good for most of these pupils, irrespective of ability, and it is comparable with the progress of other pupils.
- All teaching is good and most teaching is outstanding. Teachers are inspirational. They are good role models who share their own vocations with the pupils. All the teachers have excellent subject knowledge. This enables pupils to approach lessons with great interest, passion and enthusiasm.
- All pupils, even those with learning difficulties, are religiously literate. They all know and understand how to think about spiritual issues. During the inspection, the Year 2 teacher challenged the pupils to "Go into your heart rooms", to reflect on what kinds of gifts God has given them. All the pupils were highly motivated and they showed that, from this early age, they have an ability to reflect spiritually.
- During the inspection, teachers consistently used Religious Education resources in inspirational ways. For example, in Year 1, pupils were asked to look at and discuss very meaningful pictures about how they can walk in the footsteps of Jesus in their everyday lives. It was evident that these pictures had been very carefully chosen to inspire and motivate the pupils to understand discipleship and the virtues of forgiveness and generosity. Teachers' planning is outstanding.
- Pupils' knowledge of the Bible is consistently outstanding. From their earliest years pupils can interpret Bible stories and see their relevance in their own lives. Pupils understand how these events and stories can help with decision making. During the inspection, a Year 3 class was able to recognise the carefully chosen objects that are associated with John the Baptist and they were able to compare the baptism of Jesus with their own baptism. When thinking about vocation, pupils were able to make connections between the call of Samuel and the need to listen to God in their own lives.
- Behaviour in lessons is outstanding because almost all pupils enjoy Religious Education. One pupil responded to a questionnaire about why he liked Religious Education by saying, "It brings me closer to God".
- The school has successfully focused on matching pupils' work to their abilities. This outstanding skill is consistently evident in Religious Education lessons and books. As a result, all pupils approach lessons with great interest, passion and enthusiasm. Pupils enjoy tackling challenging activities and respond exceptionally well to opportunities which extend their learning.
- Both staff and pupils have a very good knowledge of the teachings of the Catholic faith. All teachers use a variety of questioning techniques, which ensure that pupils

can reflect on their faith and how they can apply it to their lives. Pupils can answer with confidence and a good knowledge of their Catholic faith.

- The teacher's challenging questioning in Year 4, observed during the inspection, developed the pupils' understanding of their faith and made them use key vocabulary in their answers. The pupils showed a good knowledge of scripture and recognised why the life and example of Jesus is good news. They linked their answers and made references to the CSPP. The teacher showed excellent subject knowledge throughout the lesson.
- In a Year 5 lesson, linked to the theme of the sacraments of Marriage and Holy Orders, the pupils engaged in a high quality and appropriately solemn dramatisation of an ordination and marriage ceremony. The pupils followed the liturgy faithfully with all the class involved as congregation, joining in all the responses. The pupils displayed excellent knowledge about both sacraments and empathised with the challenges of keeping the solemn promises made. They recognised that these sacraments are truly about vocation. The beginning and ending of the lesson were pupil-led acts of worship, which concluded with the class singing and signing a faith song they had learned at Alton Castle. The pupils had a very good understanding of both these sacraments and vocation.
- All the pupils' Religious Education books are a cause for celebration. They are beautifully presented and there is a wide variety of high quality learning. The quality of pupils' current work both in class and in written work is outstanding. All teachers have high expectations for all pupils. This is reflected in the teachers' marking of pupils' work. The school has worked very hard to ensure that marking is carried out consistently to a very high standard. Pupils always respond to their teachers', 'Now Do This', comments.
- Celebration of achievement and effort are a focus for all the staff. This is evident in the encouragement and praise that pupils consistently receive in their Religious Education books and in lessons.

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

- From September 2017, Religious education has been led by the highly experienced and passionate head teacher who has continued to implement the thorough monitoring and evaluation procedures that her predecessor had embedded.
- A member of staff has been identified to take over the leadership of Religious Education from September 2018. During this academic year, she has shadowed the headteacher in preparation for this very important role.
- The headteacher, Religious Education subject leader and governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Religious Education has a high priority on the timetable and it receives the recommended minimum 10% of taught curriculum time.
- The senior leadership team and the governors ensure that Religious Education has full parity with other core subjects. The value placed on Religious Education is reflected in the high quality of work in pupils' books, which are beautifully presented.
- Standards of Religious Education are monitored and evaluated by the headteacher and Religious Education subject leader and they are frequently reported to and discussed with governors. A foundation governor has also frequently accompanied the head teacher on learning walks and book trawls, which he has then reported about to governors.
- The pupil spiritual council, the Religious Education subject leader, the head teacher and a foundation governor have monitored the quality of displays and prayer focuses

in classrooms and around the school. This has resulted in a very high standard of Religious Education displays, which enhances the spiritual environment of the school.

- The headteacher and the Religious Education subject leader ensure that pupils' learning is evaluated during formal and informal observations, by the outcomes of book trawls and pupil interviews and by the analysis of data. There is an agreed schedule for monitoring Religious Education throughout the school. This results in well targeted planning and strategic action taken by the school, which leads to outstanding outcomes in Religious Education.
- Experienced teachers act as mentors to newly qualified teachers, supporting them in teaching Religious Education. Consequently, all teachers are developed well in the teachings of the Catholic faith and they have a very good subject knowledge.
- The headteacher, who has faithfully served this school as a teacher and a head teacher for twenty-seven years, has an expert knowledge and experience of how to teach pupils Religious Education. She has an inspiring vision for outstanding teaching and learning, which she communicates to staff, governors, parents and pupils. She works very hard to establish a very good support programme for staff development that enables the happy staff team to fulfil this vision. The parish priest plays an important role in ensuring that staff understand the doctrine and facts about the Catholic faith. This results in teaching that is likely to be outstanding and at least consistently 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.

- St Augustine's pupils plan and lead annual Lenten and Advent liturgies with other Caritas schools. Initially, the schools work in groups of three or four who meet to plan the Liturgy. During Holy Week, the planned liturgy is presented to each school in the group. The pupils move from school to school on an allocated day. The focus of the liturgies this year is 'Vocation'.
- Mass is celebrated by the parish priest each week in the parish church. Staff, pupils and parents feel their own faith is strengthened by listening to the parish priest who teaches them about different elements of the Faith. As a result, pupils, staff and parents have a very good knowledge of the Mass.
- All staff regularly participate in prayer sessions at the beginning of the school day. During the inspection, there was a whole staff prayer session, which enabled staff to reflect in a quiet, thoughtful way. They prayed for the pupils, themselves and world issues. All staff were engaged and respectful.
- Quality professional development for all staff ensures that they can offer very good liturgy to pupils that is creative and age appropriate.
- During the inspection, a teaching assistant led the whole staff in a thoughtful prayer experience at the start of a busy day. Staff were able to pray spontaneously

and reflect on their lives. This demonstrates that the prayer life of the staff at St Augustine's is very well developed.

- From their earliest years in the Reception class, pupils at St Augustine's are taught how to pray. During the inspection, reception pupils prepared a prayer service, setting out the altar cloth and placing objects onto it. Nearly all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, were then able to pray spontaneously. The teacher modelled how to pray.
- The pupils' spiritual council regularly meets to discuss and review elements of worship. They are responsible for helping with assemblies, setting up, leading pupils in and out of assembly and setting a good example for all pupils.
- During the inspection, members of the spiritual council confidently led a whole school assembly. They spoke without prompt sheets and engaged all the younger pupils' interest and inspired in them deep thought and heartfelt response, through direct question and answer sessions. All pupils were attentive and respectful. Younger pupils, when invited, were able to pray spontaneously. Pupils used silence and there was a depth of reverent participation in prayer. The school choir sang the verses of the responsorial psalm and the rest of the school joined in and sang the chorus beautifully. There is a genuine enthusiasm for Collective Worship, reflected in the quality of the school singing. The prayer service was a sacred experience and the spiritual council who led it were outstanding.
- Pupils frequently lead class prayer. A rota is in place in each class to ensure each pupil can lead prayer at least once during the year.
- When interviewed, during the inspection, pupils described the many opportunities that they have in school to pray. They use a wide range of traditional prayers and they are encouraged to write and lead with their own prayers.
- Pupils value the moments of quiet that they have for meditation. This is a feature of school Masses in church. The parish priest encourages the pupils to pray in silence.
- The pupils are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were learning about Mary in an inspirational lesson and they were able to use a range of prayers to Mary. One pupil was able to recite the 'Hail Holy Queen' fluently and without a prompt sheet.
- Pupils from St Augustine's see the need for God in their lives. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff. Pupils and staff pray together often in a spontaneous way, from their hearts.
- The school invests a great deal of time and effort in quality music teaching, so that pupils can engage fully and joyfully through singing and playing instruments during Collective Worship. The deputy head is an accomplished pianist and she has trained the school choir, who take a pride in leading the singing in liturgies.
- During the inspection, the school choir sang the verses of the responsorial psalm and the rest of the school joined in and sang the chorus beautifully. Music is part of classroom worship and was used effectively by Year 5 and Year 6.
- The environment in the school is very prayerful. The corridors are filled with different art works. Many of them have been done by pupils. All these images encourage prayer.
- The memorial prayer cabin is viewed with affection by the children. They know that it is a special place that they can use for prayer and reflection.

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

- Collective Worship is promoted and led by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the Religious Education subject leader. They ensure that all staff are professionally

developed and confident so that they have expert knowledge of planning and delivering Collective Worship.

- The pupils' spiritual council is responsible for leading whole school and class prayer services. The headteacher frequently meets with them to offer training. As a result, they are confident to engage younger children, speak without prompt sheets and lead discussions with the whole school. They take pleasure in volunteering to practise these skills during break times and they work in small groups.
- Continual professional development enables staff to have an extensive knowledge and understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. At St Augustine's Collective Worship is accessible to pupils in both traditional and contemporary contexts. Pupils experience a rich variety of opportunities to pray.
- From their earliest years, pupils in all classes are taught how to prepare and lead Collective Worship. This gives them a confidence and motivation to volunteer to lead whole school Collective Worship.
- The headteacher formally observes and evaluates Collective Worship. Her findings are included in the school development plan and acted upon. Consequently, pupils experience a good variety of prayer styles and traditions. However, the rest of the staff also now need to formally observe Collective Worship.
- Pupils formally observe and evaluate Collective Worship.
- A very knowledgeable foundation governor has formally observed Collective Worship. However, other governors also need to do this. The observations of all stakeholders need to feed into the school improvement plan and the impact of any actions need to be recorded.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	103431
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	Voluntary Aided
Age range	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	208 and 44 part-time nursery
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Paulina Wisniewska-Kawecka
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Stanley
Telephone number	0121 554 5069
Website address	<a href="http://www.staugust.bham.sch.uk">www.staugust.bham.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiry@staugust.bham.sch.uk">enquiry@staugust.bham.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	June 2013

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL**

- St Augustine's is a one-form entry Catholic primary school with a nursery serving the parish of St Augustine's in Handsworth, Birmingham.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 91%.
- The percentage of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds is significantly above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins is above the national average
- The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is above the national average.
- Attainment on entry is well below the national average.
- There have been some significant changes since the last inspection: Pupil mobility is increasing. The governing body has undergone significant changes including the appointment of a new chair. In February 2014, the school became an active member of the Caritas Christi in Urbe (CCIU), 'The Love of Christ in the City' group, consisting of twelve Catholic primary and two Catholic secondary schools.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION**

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors, Rose Brookes and Stephen Godber.
- 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 the headteacher.
- 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 three governors, the Catholic Life link governor, a foundation governor, the headteacher, the Religious Education subject leader and the parish priest.
- The inspectors attended whole school Collective Worship and undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching in Religious Education, 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, Analyse School Performance (ASP) data, the school development plan, the Religious Education action plan, teachers' planning and learning journals.