



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

REPORT ON THE MONITORING INSPECTION OF OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS

School: St John's Catholic Primary School

Address: Innage Gardens
Bridgnorth
Shropshire
WV16 4HW

Tel No: 01746 762061

URN: 123551

Headteacher: Mrs J Buzzing

Chair of Governors: Mr G Sabin

Date of Inspection: 20 March 2018

Inspector: Mrs J Johnson

Areas of Outstanding Practice

Outcomes for pupils

Pupils at St John's are a delight, and they are keen to take on a range of roles and responsibilities in the school. They are confident in expressing the Gospel values that clearly underpin each aspect of the school's work. They are proud to be part of St John's school community and the local community in Bridgnorth. They know that they are part of God's family.

The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is very good, and the pupils say that they particularly enjoy their Religious Education lessons when teachers make the lessons fun or use creative ways of engaging them in their learning. They are building up a rich religious literacy, and can articulate how their Christian faith shapes their lives.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their involvement in the Catholic life of the school and the range of opportunities for developing their spiritual life. The range of fundraising and charity work undertaken by the school is impressive. At the time of the Inspection, pupils were eagerly looking forward to the CAFOD biscuit sale organised by the Reception Class. The new Pax Room is appreciated by pupils, and they are very confident that an adult will support them should they have any worries or problems. Strong links with a range of outside agencies ensure that the needs of the pupils are met.

The newly formed Faith Council is keen to contribute to the prayer life of the school, and its members are great ambassadors for the school. Pupils throughout the school are able to plan their own Collective Worship, at an age appropriate level. They pray with respect and reverence. A new School Prayer Book of both traditional and more modern prayers has been produced, ensuring that Jesus is placed at the heart of everything the school does.

Leaders and Managers

The new Headteacher is ambitious for the school, and has brought innovative ideas with her. She is ably assisted by the Deputy Headteacher, and together, they are determined to ensure the very best Catholic education for the pupils in the school. The Religious Education Co-ordinator, who has been in post for some time, has embraced these new ideas, and so the capacity for future development is strong.

Staff and Governors are fully committed to the school's Catholic Mission and ethos. The Chair of Governors, Link Governor for Religious Education and the Parish Priest are frequent visitors to the school and are knowledgeable about the school's strengths. They play an active role in evaluating the school's provision and find things out for themselves first hand. Following their termly visit, they give a written report of their findings. During the school's recent period of instability of leadership, the Governors have kept the school's Catholic ethos at the heart of its work.

The Headteacher has a clear vision for the school, and is relentless in her quest for excellence. Standards in Religious Education are good, but the school rightly recognises that they could be higher. A full programme of monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and standards in Religious Education is in place, and it is clear that issues identified are being addressed.

Parents are kept well informed about developments in Religious Education, and are welcomed into school to celebrate the school's Catholic life.

Recent staff changes have meant that there are currently some inconsistencies in assessment procedures, but this has been identified by the Religious Education Co-ordinator.

Provision

Religious Education is clearly given equal status to the other core subjects at St John's, and is very well resourced. Lovely displays in the hall and communal areas are evidence of this. 21st century forms of communication, eg Pope Francis Twitter, are on display and frequently updated to keep pupils abreast of world events. In all classrooms, Religious Education displays and focus areas are given prominence, and current topic work is celebrated. This reinforces Religious Education's high status in the school.

A beautiful new altar and lectern have been purchased to enhance liturgical celebrations. Mass is regularly celebrated in school, and pupils are confident with the Mass responses.

Three different, age appropriate bibles (for EYFS/KS1, LKS2 and UKS2) have also been bought, and are in regular use in lessons. This means that pupils are adept at finding appropriate scripture passages and using them in their work.

The school is committed to supporting parents develop the spiritual and prayer life of their children, and as such, send home 'Walk with me' Calendars and booklets during Advent and Lent.

Prayer is central to the life of the school, and these punctuate the school day. Pupils are gaining confidence in expressing their personal prayers and come forward eagerly to use the 'Prayer Chair' in school Collective Worship each Monday. Pupils particularly enjoy researching for and contributing to their class assemblies, and recent and future themes include Mothers' Day, Holy Week and St George's Day. Parents welcome these opportunities to share in the celebrations.

Catholic traditions and practices are celebrated in school, for instance the Rosary is prayed throughout October and May, and the school is planning a May Procession this year. Pupils talked enthusiastically about their recent 'One Life' Retreat Day, which was described by pupils as 'excellent', and also about their work finding out about other faiths.

The school's links with the local community in Bridgnorth are extremely strong, and the school has a high profile in the town. Pupils have many opportunities to participate in a wide range of community events, often outside the school day.

In order to develop further, Leaders should

- offer more and regular opportunities for pupils to independently plan and lead Collective Worship
- ensure the inconsistencies they have already identified in teaching and assessment are addressed