



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## INSPECTION REPORT

### ST OSBURG'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL COVENTRY

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Inspection dates 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011  
Reporting Inspector Teresa Quick

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Primary
Age range of pupils	4-11 years
Number on roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Canon Garry Byrne
School address	Upper Hill St, Coventry CV1 4AP
Telephone number	02476 227165
E-mail address	headteacher@st-osburgs.coventry.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2008
DCSF School Number	331/3406
Unique Reference Number	103711

**Headteacher** Mrs Tracey McGeever

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by a Diocesan Inspector. The inspectors visited 3 full religious education (RE) lessons to observe teaching and learning, pupils' behaviour, and held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. She observed the school's work, including Mass and an assembly. She looked at a range of evidence, including key documentation such as the school's Single Integrated Improvement Plan, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in RE, and pupils' work.

## Information about the school

St Osburg's is an average size primary school with a nursery. It is built on the same site as St Osburg's Church and situated in the city centre of Coventry. It is the oldest established Catholic school in the city. There are 199 pupils on roll from Reception to Year 6. 69% are baptised Catholics. It is a culturally diverse school. 35% of the pupils are from Poland, India and Africa. For 37% of pupils English is not their first language. The school draws from across the City and from areas of socio-economic deprivation. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion of pupils with special needs and/or disabilities is average. There is an on-site special educational needs and /or disabilities resource base "Keys" managed by the local authority.

## Overall effectiveness of the school as a Catholic school

St Osburg's is now an outstanding Catholic school and is very well led by the headteacher and her deputy, her leadership team and the subject leader. They lead the school by example in the practice of their faith. It is a warm, welcoming school with an excellent ethos of working together. The school's revised mission statement known to both staff and pupils is at the heart of this Catholic community. "We are a community of Love, Learning and Growing in the Image of Christ." It provides a context for teaching and learning and the spiritual growth and development of pupils. There is a shared sense of purpose which is a strength of the school. The leaders know their school well. The Catholic ethos permeates the whole school environment. There is outstanding work to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teaching promotes purposeful learning and enjoyment in RE. Pupils enter school with standards in RE that are very low. Through careful planning, monitoring and support, good progress and attainment is made especially by the pupils who spend most of their years in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 at St Osburg's. There are clear guidelines and expectations of both work and behaviour. Very good care, guidance and support are provided in a happy environment. Pupils participate well and can plan and lead collective worship. Morale is high among both staff and pupils. Pupils are proud of their school. The governing body led by the parish priest has a good understanding of the needs of this diverse community. There are very good links with the parish.

There is very good and improving provision for RE. The governors make a concerted effort to appoint Catholic teachers. All permanent teachers are Catholics who have a very good knowledge of RE. This supports the high level of provision for RE. The quality of teaching is good with some outstanding teaching observed. Evidence provided shows that there is now a greater consistency in the quality of teaching across the school. The staff work well together across each key stage. Planning is based on the *Curriculum Strategy for Religious Education*, with clear links to PSHE, family life and sex education and some multi-faith activities. The RE curriculum is very broad with teachers naturally through their own Catholicity linking with other areas of the curriculum. The curriculum is enriched by visits, visiting speakers and links to schools in rural Devon, Poland, South Africa, Ireland and Nigeria. There is a lack of sufficient detailed teaching about other faiths and formalised links to other subjects. The school makes outstanding provision for collective worship. Pupils are offered a variety of different opportunities to engage in differing prayer experiences and in varied settings.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding. Assessment has been an area of improvement. Since the last inspection monitoring and assessment are more focused. The

procedures and systems have been refined and are continuing to develop. The leadership has as a priority the development of the Catholic life and religious education. There are clear plans towards continuous improvement based on useful evidence and data collection. There is whole school commitment to raise standards in RE. Self assessment has been rigorous but sometimes the school underestimates its achievements.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Develop a more cohesive curriculum for RE to include all elements of religious education and with clear links to other subjects.

## **How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils**

Pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning in RE. Most pupils arrive at school with little or no experience of prayer or church attendance. Pupils with particular learning needs and /or disabilities, through work planned to meet their needs and targeted help, also make good progress. The quality and quantity of written work in RE books has improved since the last inspection, and generally matches that seen in English.

Generally good progress is made by all groups of pupils as a result of good teaching. Religious education is given high priority. Pupils enjoy and are aware of the importance of their faith and RE in their lives and this is reinforced and developed through the example and teaching of the staff. Standards overall are in line with expectations which is good progress from the very low base on entry. Some pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 have standards which are above those expected for their age. Pupils are given a good start to their religious education. In the Early Years and in Key Stage 1 pupils lack knowledge but they are interested and open to religious opportunities. Much good teaching has taken place so that Year 2 pupils are confident learners who can talk about the stories in the life of Jesus, including parables and miracles. They can also recount stories from the Old Testament and they know many of the traditional prayers of the Church. Learning develops well throughout the Key Stage 2 years. By Year 6 pupils talk with understanding about the Mass in particular those who serve at Mass. They talked enthusiastically about receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Behaviour at all times during the inspection was very good. The care, guidance and support ensure that pupils develop respect for the staff and each other. Pupils feel safe, secure and valued.

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. When pupils first arrive in the school few families celebrate their faith. For many pupils the school provides them with their first teachers of the faith. Together the school and the priest, who is a regular visitor to the school, enable pupils to achieve very good spiritual and moral development. The pupils from an early age are taught to understand right from wrong. They understand and absorb the values of the school and accept the high standards expected of them. Pupils work and play well together. On entry to the school many pupils have low social skills. Where necessary pupils have the opportunity to benefit from the Rainbows Bereavement Programme to enhance the support they need emotionally and socially. Through the very good support given pupils develop very well socially during their time at St Osburg's.

The pupils' response to collective worship both during the assembly and the Mass was excellent. This contributes significantly to the pupils' spirituality. At the weekly school Mass during the inspection the behaviour of the pupils was exemplary. They were attentive, showed respect and reverence and all pupils taking an active part in the Mass did so with a calm maturity. Some parishioners attending the Mass ensured that it was also a community event. There are special celebratory Masses during the sacramental preparation time. The school and the priest lead the parents to help their children with the preparation for the sacraments. Care and guidance towards their faith is the bed rock of this school. Pupils' personal and religious development is significantly impacted upon through the dedicated care and guidance they receive. Pupils are developing an understanding of why we pray. They are familiar with some of the traditional prayers of the Church

a knowledge that develops as they move through the school. They are also able to write and say their own.

## How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school

The leadership of the school is outstanding. They have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils and together with the priest and governing body work with enthusiasm. They are the key to the Catholic life of the pupils and are dedicated to improving outcomes for the pupils. This is unmistakably a Catholic school. From the school entrance and all around the school are good, carefully produced displays, crucifixes, statues and artefacts that reminds everyone that this is a Catholic community. At the heart of school life are the regular liturgical celebrations and daily acts of worship. There is a living faith in the school. There is continuous informal monitoring of the Catholic life as well as the formal monitoring by staff and governors. There is the permanent desire to provide for the needs of the pupils and improve provision. Staff lead by example and are excellent role models for the pupils. Catholic values and beliefs are lived out in the daily life of the school. The school provides a secure positive environment and motivates the pupils. This is an inclusive school where pupils are known, appreciated and treated equally. Governors promote inclusive practice.

The subject leadership is outstanding in its quiet drive to support the pupils. The present subject leader has recently taken the roll during the secondment of the subject leader. She has moved the subject forward. She encourages and supports teachers and leads by example in good practice. She has the desire and knowledge to develop a more cohesive curriculum. She has observed lessons, completed a book trawl and ensures coverage of the *Curriculum Strategy for Religious Education*. With the priest she set a clear plan for the activities for the year relating to religious education and the Catholic life. Staff are supportive of the drive to provide the best possible Catholic life and religious education for the pupils. By personal contact encourage parents and their children to join them at the regular Sunday Family Mass, with increasing success. The school and priest work in partnership to improve Catholic life. The school has limited opportunities to extend the pupils' understanding of their Catholic heritage. They make a visit to the old Cathedral in Coventry, Year 6 pupils talked with enthusiasm about their visit to St Chad's Cathedral as part of their Confirmation preparation and the school still enjoys their traditional celebrations on St Patrick's Day.

The school makes good provision for community cohesion. Pupils work and play well together. Relationships throughout the school are good. The school has a learning mentor who works with the parents and pupils and her supports helps to lead to the successful relationships throughout the school. The school is totally integrated in parish life. There are extensive links with the local community and the Catholic community in the City. The school recognises the importance of actively working on links with other Catholic schools to share good practice. The school has good links with the Catholic comprehensive school. With a local Special school they produced a recipe book, they have links with a rural school in Devon and their global links include schools in Poland, Ireland, Nigeria and South Africa. Pupils gain knowledge of the global dimension of the Church. None of these links schools provide an appreciation of other faiths.

## The quality of the school's work in providing Catholic education

The quality of teaching is good. This judgement was made from the teaching seen and the quality and breadth of evidence in pupils' books, from displays and from discussion with the pupils. Some outstanding practice was seen during the inspection. Planning is good, based on the *Curriculum Strategy for Religious Education* but adapted to the needs of the school. The school follows the diocesan family life and sex education programme *All that I Am*. Multi faith teaching is limited but they include in the curriculum the work towards a greater understanding of the beliefs of other people and their cultures. Planning is able to respond to the differing ability of the pupils through the developing assessment procedures. Teachers employ a good range of teaching styles and

activities to engage learners and to provide a level of work to meet their needs. Teaching assistants provide a very good level of support. Written work generally matches pupil's needs. Marking has been a focus for improvement and is gaining in consistency across the school. It is positive and much of that seen was also developmental. In the best examples marking offers feedback which encourages further reflection and understanding. Recording is done in differing ways. Excellent use is made of film and photographic evidence. Pupils are able to work both collaboratively and independently. Resources provide for the needs of the *Curriculum Strategy for Religious Education* but there is a lack of the school's own resources for teaching about other religions. There are good informal links between RE and other subjects in particular literacy, music drama, art and ICT. The school has been involved in an excellent huge whole-school project based on the painting "Tobias and the Angel". The school is proud that photographic evidence of their work will be displayed at the National Gallery. This is an area where RE has flowed across the whole curriculum.

Provision for collective worship is an area of excellence. Evidence shows that much work has been done to develop prayer. Few pupils enter school with any experience of prayer. The school is an active praying community and at ease in doing so. Prayer and reflection time are well observed and pupils demonstrate a capacity to be still and reflective. Prayer times combine listening to scripture, responding through prayer and reflecting through meditation. Each classroom has a prayer focus with appropriate artefacts and colours linked to the liturgical year. Prayer boxes on the prayer tables are being used by the pupils to place their individual prayers. This is good practice. Prayer is an important part of the school day. Pupils are exposed to differing types of prayer and liturgies linked to the Church's year. Members of the Legion of Mary lead the Rosary each week in school for volunteer groups of pupils. A recent development is the use of Prayer Bags that the pupils take home and pray with their family. Pupils are in the early stages of developing an understanding of differing faiths. There is the expectation that all children learn to appreciate, value and respect the beliefs of others. There are links with other faiths through contact with the Godiva Sisters that crosses all faiths within the City. Through them they have had speakers from other faiths talking to the pupils. The school plans to return to visiting places of worship of other faiths. Each year the School Council organises fund raising for various planned local and international appeals and sudden disasters. Year 6 sing in the summer term with the other Coventry Catholic schools in the "Big Sing" and in the local home for the elderly at Christmas. The school looks for ways to develop collective worship further and become even more meaningful for the pupils. It makes an outstanding contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development