

EAST ANGLIA DIOCESAN SCHOOLS' SERVICE



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Interim Monitoring Visit

St. Louis Catholic Primary Academy, Newmarket

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St. Louis Catholic Academy is a one and a half form entry school for pupils from 3 to 11 years. There are 344 pupils on roll, of which 78% are Catholic and 53% of staff are Catholic. The school serves the parishes of Our Lady Immaculate and St. Etheldreda, Newmarket and Our Lady and St. Philip, Kirtling, Newmarket. Pupils attend from a wide geographical range from Newmarket, the surrounding villages and villages around Bury St. Edmunds, Mildenhall and Ely. The percentage of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) is 3% of which four pupils have an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) and 43% of pupils have English as an additional language.

The interim monitoring visit timetable included a welcome, a meeting with the parish priest; an initial meeting with the head of school and the Religious Education (RE) leader followed later in the morning with an in-depth meeting to scrutinise data, the self-evaluation form (SEF) and plans of action; a whole school collective worship; an RE learning walk and observations of RE lessons including Foundation Stage to Year 6; a scrutiny of pupils' RE workbooks and "Journey with Jesus" books with three levels of ability from each year group / mixed year group; a meeting with the co-chairs of governors and RE governor; a meeting with pupils from Y1 to Y6 and a verbal feedback meeting with the chief executive officer (CEO), executive headteacher, head of school and RE leader.

(The areas to improve are in italics). The visit lasted approximately 5 hours.

RE Denominational Inspection September 2016 Improvements:

Fully embed the recently adopted assessment programme "Journey with Jesus" to monitor pupils' progression in RE knowledge, skills and understanding so that any attainment gaps recorded, can be actioned and rectified.

This target has **been fully embedded** with consistent use of "Journey with Jesus" assessment books, which identify areas of progress and attainment for individual pupils.

With changes made nationally, introducing the new age-related standards in RE, (which the diocese has embraced), and the introduction of diocesan 'I Can' statements for RE assessment, which are linked to the diocesan primary curriculum plan, **the inspector, head of school and RE leader agree** that two new targets should replace the original target. The targets are as follows:-

To embed the use of the diocesan RE 'I Can' statements for assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding and for the school to develop a consistent system which impacts on future planning and delivery of Religious Education.

To ensure that any gaps in attainment and progress in RE continue to be monitored and that group appropriate strategies are implemented to impact on learning.

Increase pupils' involvement in independently planning worship by providing opportunities for groups of pupils to prepare and present short acts of worship within their class setting.

With regard to this target, **aspects have been successfully implemented.**

Mini Vinnies have an active role in the Catholic life of the school and also support gospel led collective worship through reading the Gospel and preparing visual aids. Pupils take part in the regular Masses in school and classes write and share prayers. The school is planning to introduce reflective and meditative worship and sessions.

When taking into account the evidence of pupils' spirituality and ability to articulate religious vocabulary with knowledge and understanding, **the inspector suggests** and the head of school and RE leader agree that the following target replaces the original:-

To ensure pupils within KS2 are given opportunities to plan, lead and deliver a variety of whole school collective worship presentations which reflect their knowledge of values and make links with scripture and Catholic social teaching.

The self-evaluation form (SEF) clearly defines embedded impact of actions within Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship and the inspector agrees with the content and the areas to improve upon. The school development plan and subject development plan targets link with the SEF and are appropriately challenging with realistic timescales. The attainment overview from EYFS to Y6 clearly identifies the average attainment of each year group (colour-coded) and also includes comprehensive data for groups of pupils' 'average attainment' and 'at or above expectation'.

In the meeting with the governors, the inspector suggested that when governors monitor and evaluate collective worship, they use a formal proforma as a record of evidence when providing feedback to the full governing body. The governors were keen to introduce this as they compile reports for other key areas of the school's curriculum and vision.

A whole school collective worship, with the focus of 'loving your neighbour' was led prayerfully and enthusiastically by the RE leader, focussing on singing hymns which linked to the gospel reading of the week for when the school returns after half term. The pupils came into the hall reverently and sang with increasing enthusiasm and joy, particularly during choruses and when they divided into two parts, which added a liveliness to the worship. There was also a poignant and prayerful good-bye to a pupil and to his parents who have supported the school for many years.

The learning walk gave a good insight into the teaching of RE and a variety of teaching strategies were seen with pupils responding enthusiastically and reflectively. Pupils' use of religious vocabulary reflected their depth of spirituality and increasing knowledge and understanding of RE. In Early Years the school's ethos and values underpin the pupils' learning giving them an excellent start to their whole education and in Y6 a member of the NSPCC led a session with the pupils about staying safe. Pupils are fully supported in their learning by their teachers, teaching assistants and higher level teaching assistants.

Pupils' workbooks and "Journey with Jesus" assessment books show an increasing depth of knowledge and understanding of the scriptures, teaching of the Church and their own reflections as they progress through the school.

In the meeting with a group of pupils from Y1 to Y6 pupils articulated their love of their faith, what Jesus means to them, and their involvement in supporting charities and taking part in Mass. One pupil remarked "I feel safe when I go to Mass as I know I am very close to Jesus." They also stated that they felt very happy and cared for at school.

The head of school and RE leader with the support of the governors including the parish priest, have worked with immense dedication to successfully continue to build on the vision and ethos of the school, supporting the staff with commitment and ensuring all pupils are gaining greater knowledge and understanding in Religious Education, as they grow and develop spiritually. Feedback regarding the interim monitoring visit was that it had been helpful to the school.

I would like to thank everyone at St. Louis Academy for such a warm and friendly welcome and to thank particularly, the pupils, for their wonderfully enthusiastic and spiritual comments about their school.

Jan Southgate, Diocesan S48 Inspector