



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## Section 48 Inspection Report

### **BISHOP ULLATHORNE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Part of the Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company  
Leasowes Avenue, Coventry, CV3 6BH

Inspection dates: 14-15 June 2022  
Lead Inspector: Rachel Waugh

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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:* *Outstanding*

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

This is an Outstanding Catholic school because:

- All actions from the previous inspection and monitoring visit have been implemented wholeheartedly for the benefit of all stakeholders.
- The Catholic Life and mission of the school are evident in all aspects of its work. The 'Ullathorne Way' articulates what it means to be a school member and is embraced by all stakeholders. As a result, there is a clear vision which encompasses the spiritual, moral, and vocational development of all.
- Religious Education is at the forefront of development, and innovation is a strength which ensures the highest quality curriculum experience for pupils. It is well planned, and delivery is consistently effective to involve all learners passionately and enthusiastically. As a result, pupils enjoy the subject, and both attainment and progress levels are high.
- Curriculum leaders have a clear insight into gaps in pupils' achievement through open and honest monitoring and evaluation. As a result, they have skilfully embarked on strategies to close the gaps, and all pupils are making effective progress.
- Collective Worship is highly effective. The lay chaplain is exceptionally skilled and empowers staff and students alike to take an active part in the planning and delivery of prayer from the traditional to the contemporary. As a result, pupils and staff routinely engage in high-quality worship, profoundly impacting their spiritual and moral formation.

## FULL REPORT

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

- Continue to develop the formation of staff to secure consistency in the quality of form time prayer.
- To further close gaps, monitor and evaluate the provision of Religious Education for key groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils.
- Embrace opportunities to further engage with the parishes and local community to ensure the pupils of Bishop Ullathorne are beacons of faith beyond the school site.

## THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school	Outstanding
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	Outstanding

### CL1 The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school

- Pupils appreciate, value, and actively participate in the Catholic life and mission of the school. The school motto, 'for God alone', shapes the daily life and work of the school.
- They contribute to the school's evaluation significantly and take the lead in shaping the Catholic life of the school. There is an extensive quality assurance from all stakeholders; they direct ideas and suggestions that are realised into the lived reality for the life of the school.
- Pupils have respect for themselves; they know they are loved and created in God's image. As a result, behaviour is outstanding, and all students buy into the 'Ullathorne Way'. They know how the school's Catholic Life impacts the school's work.
- They embrace membership of the school community, evident in the extensive outreach work they undertake for the foodbank 'Sister Sister', to name just a few.
- Pupils have a clear sense of stewardship, work with the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust as part of the eco-schools programme, and support CAFODs 'Live Simply' campaign.
- Chaplaincy is outstanding, and pupils benefit from the extensive opportunities offered in the school and beyond in the multi academy company (MAC).
- The Pride of Ullathorne award recognises and celebrates pupils' exceptional contribution to the school's life.
- Pupils take full advantage of the personal support offered to them through the pastoral support provided by heads of year and support staff. Indeed, several pupils benefit from the bereavement support group and journal, and all pupils engage with

an appropriate citizenship, personal, social, and health education (CPSHE) programme shaped by the Catholic mission of the school.

- They enjoy the opportunities to engage with the character passport and opportunities for pupil leadership as they progress through the school.
- Pupils know what it means to be called by God and are joyful in responding to their calling.
- There is evident respect for the traditions of the Church; pupils are enthusiastic about engaging with parishes in parish visits for weekday Mass.

## **CL2 The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school**

- The mission statement is known, lived by and draws commitment from all stakeholders, including staff and pupils.
- There is a strong sense of community and a calm atmosphere around the school.
- The school environment includes God's natural world, and there is genuine care for the environment.
- The behaviour policy focuses on restorative practice and is implemented in a calm and orderly manner.
- Catholic social teaching is demonstrated by pupils' engagement in social action, including peaceful protest and campaigning.
- Chaplaincy provision is exemplary and engages the entire community.
- Retreat experiences are accessible to all pupils and are appropriate to their needs. They frequently lead to social engagement and action. For example, a recent retreat for mental health ambassadors led to the introduction of grace before meals across the school, and the Year 10 retreat was based on silent protest. More extensive residential retreats are planned for the next academic year.
- The most vulnerable are at the forefront of policy-making and practice, demonstrating the school's steadfast support of the Church's preferential option for those in need.
- There is a real strength and awareness in caring for the pastoral needs of staff, including a commitment to a well-being charter, tea and toast Fridays and the MAC bulletin.
- PSHE and relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) are appropriately planned and delivered using resources approved by the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

## **CL3 How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school**

- Leaders are deeply committed to the Catholic life of the school, and it is at the forefront of all their work.
- Self-evaluation is clear, accurate and rigorous; it informs the direction of the school's mission.
- There are planned improvements which are evidenced and documented. Areas for development marry with the school improvement plan, ensuring all identified areas are actioned upon.
- Continuing professional development (CPD) occurs frequently, and staff are well supported. Staff induction is clear, and they are encouraged to be a 'lighthouse in other people's storms', further contributing to the school's strong sense of community.
- As a result of the school's mission, staff recognise Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School as providing a high-quality academic experience and excellent pastoral care.

- The school engages with parents and works hard to establish relationships with harder-to-reach families.
- Governors are highly ambitious for the school and have engaged with a governors' audit enthusiastically to maintain the rigour and challenge of the school.
- Leaders are enthusiastic in their response to diocesan policies.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of Religious Education	Outstanding
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

### RE1 How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Good progress is made in each key stage, including groups of students. Clear and imaginative initiatives are in place to close any gaps, and, as a result, effective progress is made.
- Pupils are religiously literate and engaged young people. Oracy is highly impressive and is both ethically and theologically based. In the best lessons, pupils' reasoning is impressive and well beyond pupils' years.
- Pupils are actively engaged in lessons. The curriculum supports pupils in developing knowledge, understanding and skill, and pupils collaborate effectively in lessons. Almost all concentrate well.
- Pupils are passionate and enthusiastic learners; they enjoy challenging activities and are rarely off task.
- There is a strong history of academic success in terms of attainment and progress, both internally and at diocesan level. Pupils look forward to realising and reaping their rewards at all key stages. Tracking pupils' achievements is informative and effective.
- Assessment in pupils' books demonstrates clear progress and is supported by staff marking and feedback.

### RE2 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- Religious Education is supported by highly effective teachers who plan and implement effective lessons to enable pupils to thrive. Teaching and learning are given the highest priority, evidenced in the teaching and learning bulletin.
- Most lessons are outstanding, and where they are not, leaders have taken steps to support and coach staff to ensure the same high standards throughout the department.
- Teachers' confidence inspires learners to engage and excel in their studies.
- A wide range of teaching strategies is implemented effectively, and collaboration between pupils of all abilities is particularly effective.

- All pupils are engaged in the evaluation of learning through regular summative and formative assessment and the timely intervention of staff.
- Time is used effectively. There is a good pace to lessons which is productive but also isn't at the expense of the mastery and consolidation of learning.
- Questioning is highly effective in the best lessons, and where it is not, it is developing rapidly to ensure effective learning.
- Resources are of high quality; curriculum maps and knowledge organisers are professional and utilised in many ways to support the pupils' development.
- The passion for Religious Education amongst the team is infectious; consequently, pupils respond enthusiastically.
- High-quality feedback is a strength of the department; pupils respond appropriately and systematically to further their educational development.
- In Year 10, the Religious Education team has been supported in trialling mixed-ability teaching. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in these groups is impressive. There are equally high expectations on all learners, ensuring pupil engagement and progress are high.
- Celebration of achievement is multi-faceted and motivates pupils at all levels.

### **RE3 How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Religious Education**

- Leaders ensure Religious Education meets the demands of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and the requirements of the Archbishop of Birmingham in each key stage.
- Appropriate curriculum time is dedicated to Religious Education. Core Religious Education in the sixth form, a previous development point, has been developed into a real strength of the curriculum. Students in Key Stage 5 enthusiastically engage and benefit from the well-planned and effective provision.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education has parity with other core subjects, including financial resourcing.
- Self-evaluation is rigorous, open, and honest, including monitoring data, achievement points, learning walks, work scrutiny and pupil voice. As a result, the methodology deployed by the Religious Education team has been shared across the school. It has led to direct actions, including the production of weekly departmental bulletins.
- The curriculum leader holds an inspiring vision for Religious Education. As a result, Religious Education is at the forefront of whole school development and a flagship department. Innovation is a real strength, for example, the trial of mixed ability teaching in Year 10, raising standards, engagement, and enjoyment in Religious Education.
- Religious Education is imaginatively planned and structured.

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

<b>The quality of Collective Worship</b>	<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

**CW1 How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship**

- Acts of Collective Worship engage pupils. Outside space is utilised effectively to enable the whole school community to gather together for worship. Pupils take the lead in facilitating prayer within the school; for example, the Year 9 football team led the whole-school Lenten worship.
- As a result of engaging worship, pupils are reflective and responsive. They can hold respectful silence and appropriately contribute to communal prayer.
- Pupils are proud of the school prayer they have written and use it at every opportunity.
- Liturgical music is a strength, and pupils have continued to lead and develop the music ministry within the school independently, without staff facilitation.
- Pupils take the initiative and are creative in their liturgical planning. They are supported by structured liturgical planning and chaplaincy representatives. Pupils enthusiastically and strategically 'book in' their form groups for chaplaincy opportunities beyond the form group.
- Pupils are confident in a wide range of worship styles, from prayerful adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Marian processions to open prayer and affirmation experiences.
- Prayer spaces are appropriate and are almost always the focus of Collective Worship.
- Developing students' leadership to become extraordinary ministers of the Eucharistic enhances the opportunities for pupil participation and deepens their engagement in the liturgy.
- Pupils have an excellent knowledge of the liturgical year and the seasons and feasts of the Church. They have an appreciation of the lives of the saints and an awareness of the spiritual example of their patron, Bishop William Bernard Ullathorne.
- The school is a faithful community which shapes the spiritual and moral development of all.

**CW2 The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and operates at different levels: whole school, year groups, form groups and chaplaincy teams.
- Prayer is a feature of all experiences across the school, including before sporting fixtures.

- Prayer has a clear purpose and message appropriate for the students and based on the liturgical year using the 'Ullathorne Way'.
- Collective Worship is given the highest priority. It is well resourced and supported. This is evident in the imaginative liturgical planning completed at MAC level and subsequently led by the liturgical planning team at Bishop Ullathorne.
- Relevant staff are highly skilled in liturgical planning, and many are skilled in helping pupils plan. A small number of staff require further coaching to support pupils more wholeheartedly.

**CW3 How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship**

- Leaders and the school chaplain have expert knowledge of Collective Worship and what it should include.
- There is an excellent understanding of the Church's year and in making the rich traditions accessible and meaningful for pupils at all stages.
- Leaders are visible witnesses to outstanding Collective Worship and are excellent role models for all staff and pupils.
- Pupils' planning opportunities are extensive; they are responsible for liturgical music and year group and form group liturgical preparations.
- Collective Worship is given the highest priority. A small number of staff require a bespoke approach to ensure they have the same insight in supporting the pupils, especially during form time.
- Quality assurance and self-evaluation of Collective Worship are regular and all-encompassing; they lead to further practical developments.

**SCHOOL DETAILS**

Unique reference number	147345
Local authority	Coventry
<i>This inspection was carried out under Canon 806 of Canon Law and under Section 48 of the Education Act (2005).</i>	
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy
Age range	11-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	1059
Appropriate authority	The board of directors
Chair	John Teahan
Headteacher	Christopher Billings
Telephone number	02476 414515
Website address	<a href="https://www.bishopullathorne.co.uk">https://www.bishopullathorne.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@ullathorne.coventry.sch.uk">admin@ullathorne.coventry.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	February 2016

**INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL**

- Bishop Ullathorne is an average size of school serving the parishes of St Thomas More, St Anne's, St Joseph the Worker, All Souls, Our Lady of Assumption, St Mary and St Benedict's in Coventry.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 85%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is broadly in line with the national average.
- The percentage of SEND pupils is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins is above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with EAL is above the national average.
- Attainment on entry is average.
- Since the last inspection, the school has joined the Holy Cross Catholic MAC. The former deputy headteacher was appointed headteacher following the previous postholder's retirement; a new deputy headteacher was subsequently appointed in September 2018. The current Religious Education subject leader was appointed in September 2018 following his tenure as second in department. The person in charge of Catholic Life (PICCL) assumed the role in September 2020. A lay chaplain has also been appointed.

**INFORMATION ABOUT THIS INSPECTION**

- Two diocesan inspectors carried out the inspection: Rachel Waugh and Louisa Craig. Greg McClarey shadowed the inspection.
- 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 seventeen Religious Education lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Most of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.



- The inspectors completed 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 the chair of governors, the Catholic senior executive leader of the MAC, the headteacher, the Religious Education subject leader, the PICCL and the lay chaplain.
- The inspectors attended form-time Collective Worship, year group assembly and undertook a learning walk to look at the school's presentation of the Catholic Life and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector reviewed various 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, and teachers' planning and learning journals.