

**Catholic Diocese of Northampton**  
**Interim Monitoring Visit**  
**21<sup>st</sup> June 2019**

**St Monica's Catholic Primary School, Milton Keynes (URN: 110482)**

Since the last Section 48 inspection in July 2016, St Monica's continues to embrace and live by the values of its mission statement, 'Let Love, Trust and Respect live here', in evidence throughout the school and clearly understood by the children. The headteacher, who had only recently taken up this post at the time of the last Section 48, has now built a strong team and given clear direction to the staff in ensuring the Catholic identity underpins all school activities. There have been many staff changes during the last three years, including some of the senior leadership team, and several members of staff are in the early stages of their teaching career. They continue to address the areas for development previously identified around teacher and pupil assessment and staff have raised expectations of achievement. The school has the capacity to maintain and improve on its current grade of 'Good'.

The school's self-evaluation gives an accurate picture of the good work across all areas. They recognise the potential to further develop pupil spirituality, and are already giving the junior chaplaincy team more opportunities to take leading roles and improving areas for quiet reflection both indoors and out. The children enjoyed working on the mission statement at the beginning of the year and they are very able to articulate how it is put into practice. The mission statement and behaviour policy are based on restorative principles around forgiveness. The active welfare provision, including Treasure Box, Nurture groups and Breakfast Club, ensures that children receive support and know how to respect and care about each other. They also plan and organise events raising money for a wide range of charities, including collecting almost £2300 for *Missio* this Lent.

The learning walk showed the children to be interested, enthusiastic and well-behaved in RE lessons. The quality of RE teaching is good and is evidenced by the high standard and quantity of the work and presentation in their very attractive RE books. Work is normally well-marked including next steps, which the older children respond to. Data shows attainment to be good. The new RE/Catholic Life governor is very supportive and keen to become more actively involved with the children. Formal prayers are taught but children are also encouraged to verbalise and write their own prayers. Children are taught about the liturgical calendar and the structure of the Mass and are given opportunities to think ethically and spiritually.

Children are respectful and active participants in collective worship both in the classroom and in assemblies, with leaders from other faith groups and members of other denominations. They enjoy a range of worship styles, including gospel singing. The older children lead their weekly class collective worship, while younger children know the routine of bringing and lighting their candle at the start. The children's chaplaincy team plan and lead liturgies around special events in the liturgical calendar. Pupils have expressed their enjoyment of meditation.

Areas for further improvement should include:

- Opportunities for children to take responsibility for planning events to develop Catholic life and worship
- Refresher staff training on assessment to aid transition to whole school assessment system following diocesan guidelines

The diocesan reviewer would like to thank the headteacher, staff and children for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded throughout the visit.

**Pauline Cotton on behalf of Northampton Diocese**