



Diocese of Westminster

INSPECTION REPORT

St Catherine Catholic Nursery and Primary School

Money Lane, West Drayton. UB7 7NX
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D/E Number: 312 3403
URN: 102424

Headteacher: Mrs S. Benn
Chair of Governors: Mr M. St.John

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Date of inspection: 21st March 2011
Date of previous inspection: 6th March 2008

Reporting Inspector: Mrs M. Betts

Description of School

St Catherine Catholic Primary School is a one form entry school with part-time nursery provision for pupils aged 3 to 11 years. There are 236 pupils on roll, 86% of whom are Catholic. There are 13 teachers in the school of whom 9 (69%) are Catholic. The majority of pupils come from the parish of St Catherine, West Drayton with the remainder coming from surrounding parishes. Over half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups although almost all the children are fluent English speakers. The school has a small group of pupils from Irish Traveller backgrounds. The school provides a breakfast club and after school provision.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1: Outstanding; Grade 2: Good; Grade 3: Satisfactory; Grade 4: Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

St Catherine is a good school with many outstanding features. It has a strong Catholic ethos with committed leadership from the headteacher, senior leadership team and governors who are instrumental in effectively promoting the school's Catholic identity. Worship and prayer have a strong, central role in the life of the school. The caring ethos established and the opportunities given for pupils to discuss and reflect on their faith and its impact on their lives, ensure pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. Relationships within the school are good with staff creating an environment where pupils are respected and listened to. The pupils explained "We are one big family here and all help each other". Good progress is achieved in religious education by all pupils. Staff are committed to the high profile given to this subject.

Grade 2

Improvement since the last inspection

The last diocesan inspection report described the school as a satisfactory Catholic school with many good features. The issues for improvement related to improving the quality and quantity of pupils' written work; developing assessment and marking; and devising systematic and rigorous monitoring of teaching. The pupils' books evidence a good coverage of the curriculum. They show teachers present challenging work and have high expectations of pupil's written responses. The assessment data shows a rise in attainment. Assessments are now regularly made and books are well marked so pupils know their next steps in learning. Monitoring and evaluation are embedded practice consequently there has been good improvement in all three areas identified in the previous inspection.

Grade 2

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

All staff, including teaching assistants, have the opportunity to monitor religious education by taking part in a series of learning walks and in an evaluation of the practice seen. Governors and the parish priest are involved in this monitoring, and also seek the views of pupils. This innovative approach has shared the best practice, raised expectations/standards and embedded common practice. Governors are regularly informed of the pupil standards reached. The school leadership, therefore, has a good overall view of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement as evidenced by the accurate and comprehensive school self evaluation. The development issues from this inspection have already been highlighted by the school. Religious education has a high profile as evidenced by the targets throughout the school improvement plan. Staff undertake diocesan training as well as attending national Catholic courses, and apply their increased skills to their teaching. Each teacher has a religious education objective in their

performance management. All staff are committed to the success of the school. The school has a good capacity to improve.

Grade 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Plan more creative pupil outcomes by extending religious education links to a range of cross curricular practical activities.
 - Devise further opportunities for pupils to prepare and lead creative liturgies.
 - Embed the use of pupil targets and pupil evaluation of their own work more firmly into school practice.
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The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors have a clear vision for maintaining and developing the Catholic life and mission of the school. The Mission Statement, which includes the words "a community where the values of the life of Christ are seen to be lived out", in partnership with the school's Core Values, underpin the family atmosphere of mutual respect and care for all. A wealth of attractive displays around school confirm the Catholic identity. Governors are very supportive, well informed and evaluate the work of the school. Leadership promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development very well. Pupil achievements and successes are celebrated. Pupils willingly undertake responsibilities to help younger pupils as buddies. They value and praise the friendly, caring attitude of the teachers who listen to them and help them to solve any problems. They appreciate the many enrichment opportunities on offer. The relationship of the school with parents is very positive. Links with the parish are very strong due to the pro-active support of the parish priest.

Grade 1

The Prayer Life of the School

Worship and prayer are integral parts of each school day. Pupils write their own prayers as part of their religious education learning and these evidence a growing depth of thought. They have opportunities to pray their own intentions and to make their personal Lent promises. Worship effectively uses visual presentation, and involves a time of quiet to enable pupils to apply the message or learning to their own lives. Attractive prayer foci enhance worship. Differentiated questioning provides challenge and thoughtful reflection for each age group. Themes are based on the gospels, the current world topics and the liturgical year. The high quality singing enriches the worship. Pupils enjoy worship most when they are given opportunities to participate in the presentation or by drama. Pupils are very respectful and listen attentively. Worship effectively impacts on pupils' spirituality and develops very well their moral thinking. Mass is celebrated regularly both with the whole school and with each of the older pupils' classes. The pupils contribute to the liturgy. Parents and parishioners are invited to all celebrations and attendance is high. The priest contributes significantly to the religious and prayer life of the school.

Grade 2

How effectively does the school /college promote community cohesion?

The school is a welcoming and inclusive community where all members are respected and valued. Leadership effectively unites staff, pupils and families from a variety of cultural backgrounds and parents and pupils are invited to share and celebrate their different traditions. The school has established close links with the Catholic Traveller community in the area. The curriculum is enriched by a range of extension opportunities evidenced by a visitor discussing his experiences promoting pupils' awareness of disability. Older pupils are keen to take part in an innovative scheme that encourages awareness of problems in their community and promotes taking action to resolve these and so gain a school badge. This successfully promotes their Catholic duty of service to others. Worship provides reflection opportunities for all to link the theme with their own experiences. The pupils show their compassion for others by supporting local, national and international charities including sending money to help four slum schools in Nairobi. The school has very good links with other schools and pupils work with and compete against others from different backgrounds. Teaching about other faiths has a positive effect on pupils' understanding of other beliefs within the local community. They visit local places of worship of other faiths. The school premise is offered to local community groups.

Grade 1

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Pupils make good progress in gaining religious literacy throughout their time at the school and display a growing depth of thought. Most pupils achieve age appropriate levels of attainment and some achieve higher. Pupils are beginning to understand the life and teaching of the Catholic Church and to be able to apply this to their own experiences. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and this is reflected by their good behaviour and positive attitudes. Pupils' books are well presented with a variety of written activities including the use of Scripture and Catholic tradition as sources for their learning. Most pupils enjoy their religious education lessons especially those involving practical activities and when learning about other religions.

Grade 2

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan thoroughly with clear key questions and differentiated success criteria, made explicit to pupils. In the majority of classes questions and answers are used to promote learning and tasks involve written outcomes. Teachers use visual presentations, drama, open questioning and talk partners well to motivate pupils with their work and develop confidence in their ideas. Pupils of all abilities make progress either by extra support given or by differentiated activities. Tasks consolidate and develop the pupils' thinking. All work was well marked with affirmative praise and extension comments. Pupils are given opportunities to improve their work. Assessments are linked to national levels of attainment and progress is recorded. Judgements are moderated well within school and informally with another Catholic school. Religious education homework is set for each topic. Parents receive information of future religious education topics and how they could help with the learning at home. They also receive information linked to the current liturgical season.

Grade 2

Quality of the Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding and suitable for the age of the learners. It fulfils the requirement of the Bishops' Conference. Over 10% of curriculum time is allocated for religious education using the "Here I Am" programme supplemented with additional material. Pupils are encouraged to question and reflect so becoming aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Progression between year groups is ensured by collegiate planning within and across key stages. The religious education curriculum is linked very well with other areas of the curriculum such as literacy, and ICT (Information and Communication Technology). The school plans to promote more creative and practical learning tasks. Pupils are taught to respect other faiths and staff and pupils of different religions are used to enrich this understanding. The church and the priest are used very well as extra resources for learning. Attractive religious education displays with key topic vocabulary, give added value to this core subject. Religious education contributes very well to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

Grade 1

Leadership and management of Religious Education

The religious education subject leader, is very well supported by the headteacher and senior leadership team. They ensure this subject has a high profile across the school and that the school's core values and pupils' spirituality are promoted throughout the curriculum. Monitoring of religious education ensures that the subject's strengths and weaknesses are known. Links with outstanding practice in other Catholic schools informs the clear direction for improvement that is planned. The parish priest, as religious education link governor, takes a pro-active role in the evaluation of this subject and informs the governing body. The religious education co-ordinator guides and supports teachers extremely well and regularly leads training sessions. Equality of opportunity is promoted very well and the school is sensitive to anti-discriminatory practices. Four teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) qualification. The budget for religious education and worship is high and above that allocated to other core subjects. The school has a very good range of resources for delivering the religious education curriculum.

Grade 1