

Westminster Diocese Inspection Report

St Catherine Catholic Primary School

Money Lane, West Drayton, London UB7 7NX



Date of inspection: 22 June 2016

A. Classroom Religious Education

What is the overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy?

Overall Grade 2

At St Catherine's, the pupils receive good teaching in classroom religious education and their religious literacy is developed effectively. They achieve well and make good progress. There is a varied curriculum and it is enhanced by high quality resources. Pupils are encouraged to articulate their understanding of the topics they study in religious education and they can speak about them with confidence and insight. They know and understand the teachings of Jesus in the Gospels and can explain their relevance in today's world. The school ensures the messages of the Pope in his encyclicals are known and how the Common Good is to be sought in contemporary society. The school needs to make sure the levels of achievement are better known so that the pupils' progress is more clearly advanced.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What is the overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing?

Overall Grade 1

The Catholic life of St Catherine's is outstandingly effective in developing the pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing. The school commits its resources very generously in supporting religious education and its Catholic life, with in-service training, budgetary resources and a sustained focus. The pupils are encouraged to pray in different contexts and the school celebrates the Church's year with joy and enthusiasm. The pupils will benefit from finding further ways to pray which is more personal and self-discovered. There is a spirit of generosity to collect money and goods for various charities, both local and overseas and the pupils are articulate in their understanding that it is Christ's teaching they are following in this care of their neighbour. The governors, the parish priest who is also the RE link governor, and the parents are all very supportive of the Catholic life of the school and together the community they make has, as their mission statement puts it, 'all with Christ at the centre'.

Introduction

The inspectors would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection. The inspectors spent one day in school, visited eight lessons and two assemblies, and carried out six interviews with school staff, pupils and governors. Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, discussion with local clergy, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents.

The Inspection of St Catherine, West Drayton was carried out under the requirements of the Canon 806 and Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Framework for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Archbishop of Westminster. The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

Inspection Team

Deacon Anthony Clark
Mrs Norah Flatley
Miss Tracey Peters

Lead Inspector
Associate Inspector
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Description of School

This Voluntary Aided, school is a one form entry in the LA of Hillingdon and the locality of West Drayton. The school serves the parish of St Catherine, West Drayton and Yiewsley. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 89%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 6.9%, from other faiths 1.6% and no declared faith 2.5%. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 42%.

There are 244 pupils on roll, with 5 pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health & Care Plans (EHCP). The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is above average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is above average. There is a below average rate of families claiming free school meals. Forty one pupils receive the Pupil Premium.

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Headteacher: Miss Elizabeth Doonan
Chair of Governors: Mr Martin Arnell

Date of previous inspection: 21 March 2011
Previous Inspection grades: 2

Key for inspection grades:	<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Outstanding</i>
	<i>Grade 2</i>	<i>Good</i>
	<i>Grade 3</i>	<i>Requires improvement</i>
	<i>Grade 4</i>	<i>Causing Concern</i>

A. Classroom Religious Education

How religiously literate are pupils in the teachings and traditions of the Catholic faith and how well do they know, understand and appreciate the importance of religious faith and practice in everyday life?

What has improved in classroom religious education since the last inspection?

The previous inspection made two recommendations in respect of classroom religious education. The first was to plan more creative pupil outcomes by extending religious education links to range of cross curricular practical activities. The second was to embed the use of pupil targets and pupil evaluation of their own work more firmly into school practice. Both recommendations have been met and incorporated into the curriculum. The school has built up specific links with drama, art, writing initiatives and ICT to promote more creative outcomes in religious education. With regard to pupil targets the school set up the innovative stained glass attainment target windows. Pupils were articulate in their understanding of them during the course of the inspection.

How well does the content of classroom religious education meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory?

Grade 1

The content of classroom religious education meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory outstandingly well. In the schools' regular planning meetings where lesson plans and outcomes in religious education are discussed, the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) is central to work. The planning begins with a commercially published scheme of work which incorporates and embeds the RECD but further develops it to the needs of the pupils and add contemporary elements such as recent papal encyclicals and diocesan guidance. The school's creativity in building classroom religious education to deliver all the elements of the RECD is outstanding. The Year of Mercy was a particular focus in the current year. Those elements of the RECD which call for study and experience of other world faiths are included and are exceptionally well delivered both through teaching and visits to places of worship.

Pupil achievement (as well as attainment and progress) in religious education

Grade 2

The pupils achieve well in religious education and make good progress. Teachers make use of Levels of Attainment to teach lessons using clear lesson objectives and success criteria which are shared with the pupils. Some teachers have good knowledge and accuracy in applying the Levels of Attainment while others still need to make progress in the accuracy of their use. The school has introduced a system of child friendly assessment statements which each pupil uses to evaluate their learning and set targets for future learning. Pupils' responses in lessons and their behaviour is consistently positive. As a result pupil religious literacy is good and their responses show that they are able to use religious language to express their faith confidently. Scrutiny of their work shows that good progress is made by pupils. There is a system of marking whereby pupils are made aware of what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Pupil achievement is tracked bi-annually and there is a clear system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

The quality of teaching

Grade 2

The quality of teaching is good. Teaching over time shows good practice and results in pupils making steady progress. Regular lesson observation, learning walks and book scrutinies all contribute to the consistency of good teaching in the school. Pupil behaviour is very good and there is a climate of learning. Some teachers have strong subject knowledge and are able to engage pupils through their depth of questioning. Marking is improving and refers back to the learning objectives. Pupil conferencing takes place with the class teacher in order to ensure pupils are aware of their next steps and the level of challenge to work towards. Differentiation by outcome is in place but the school needs to develop further initiatives to develop the independent learning habits for pupils of all abilities. Homework is given half termly and enables pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade 2

The leadership and management of religious education has provided a particular challenge to the school and the response by the headteacher who is also the RE coordinator has been generous and effective. Substantial progress was needed in the vision and delivery of religious education to bring up its quality to make it the core of school's curriculum and this has been achieved through relentless and dynamic planning, support, monitoring and continuing professional development. The advisory sheets shared with teachers after monitoring visits by the head and deputy indicate the specificity and vision for improvement and growth in the subject. The governors have shown special interest and support in improving religious education and have contributed to the increased high expectations of RE prevalent in the school. The leadership and management of RE need to be devolved and extended, bringing teachers into higher involvement in the subject.

What should the school do to develop further in classroom religious education?

- Improve moderation of levels of attainment to reach accurate and consistent judgements, especially at Level 3 and Level 5
- Embed developmental marking
- Review teaching strategies to help the more able pupils progress
- Develop provision for better differentiation
- Advance pupil independent learning pathways and skills

B. The Catholic life of the school

How well do pupils experience the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing through all areas of school life?

What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous inspection recommended that the school should devise further opportunities for pupils to prepare and lead creative liturgies. The school has fully addressed this recommendation, instituting a wide range of liturgies which allow for different levels of involvement on the part of the pupils. Pupils lead liturgies in their own classrooms and take it in turns to prepare liturgies for year and key stage groups. The school has been introduced to the ideas of social justice and the Common Good in the past few years and they are now part of the common vocabulary.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum – time, staffing, accommodation, resources, budget

Grade I

The school has made a very successful journey to establishing religious education fully as the core of the curriculum. The place of prayer and Catholic teaching, along with a sustained focus on improving religious education, are all fully embedded in the life of the school. The 10% of curriculum teaching time being devoted to religious education is fully in place together with staffing and support to ensure that the subject has all the encouragement it needs to flourish. Display space both in the corridors and classrooms show the Catholic emphasis in the whole school, including crucifixes and prayer corners in each classroom. Regular opportunities for continuing professional development are planned for in the course of each year. The excellent budget provision for religious education means that the resources for both religious education and the Catholic life of the school are all in hand, including trips to other places of worship and the Wintershall Life of Christ. All families are given the Wednesday Word to support parents and emphasise the link between the Catholic life of the school and the Sunday liturgy. The governors and the parish priest who is the RE link governor all support and review with interest provision for the place of religious education in the school.

The experience of Catholic worship – prayer and liturgy – for the whole school community

Grade I

This aspect of school life is judged to be outstanding. Worship and prayer are central to the life of the school for pupils, staff, parents and the community. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to pray and reflect. They are exposed to traditional, creative and spontaneous forms of prayer both in the classroom and assemblies. The celebration of the liturgical year is at the heart of the school community. Excellent links are in place between home, school and parish. The parish priest is the link governor heavily involved in the life of the school. Pupils are actively engaged in the planning of worship opportunities enabling them to be a real celebration. There is excellent provision for supporting and providing prayer opportunities for pupils from other traditions and beliefs. Pupils' spiritual development and moral development are well provided for through times of reflection, discussion and sharing.

The commitment and contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice

Grade I

There is outstanding commitment and contribution to the Common Good, service and social justice. This strong commitment is characterised by a dynamic approach. The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils to actively engage in service to those in need. The 'Learners as Leaders' initiative for pupils in Key Stage 2 to help others is established within the school. Fundraising takes place for Cafod, UNICEF and their link school, the Ray of Hope Academy in Nigeria. Year 6 pupils are able to link opportunities for service under the Common Good to the Year of Mercy and to their understanding of following in the footsteps of Jesus. Knowledge and understanding is embedded in the RE Curriculum. Pupils are given the opportunity to discuss moral issues in the planned philosophy lesson. Pupils' relationships with each other demonstrate a clear understanding of the value of each individual. They can then apply this knowledge to the needs of others in a wider context; local, national and international. A Year 6 pupil remarked that it was their job to 'keep Jesus' ministry going'.

Enabling the authentic partnership between parents, school and parish as an integral part of the Diocese, particularly through its relationship with the Diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf

Grade I

The school enjoys and promotes excellent parental involvement – parents are involved in a 'Creative Homework' initiative, including work on the Year of Mercy, the four House Saints and the school's Mission statement. The culture of partnership is well promoted through a variety of ways including regular meetings, the school newsletter, and the website. The parents show exceptional support and affection for the school. The school plays an active part in the diocese, whether through attending headteacher conferences, deanery moderation meetings or the headteacher's work as a diocesan associate inspector. The school is committed to forging and maintaining strong links with the parish. The parish priest is a regular visitor and lets himself be interviewed by different classes as part of the curriculum. The school seeks to work with the diocese on policy and improvement strategies, welcoming visits from the diocesan advisors. The governors are involved in promoting these partnerships and provide active encouragement.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school

Grade I

The leadership and management are outstandingly effective in promoting the Catholic life of the school. Over the past four years there has been a concerted effort by the governors, headteacher and senior leadership team to reinvigorate and develop the Catholic life of the school and this has been successfully achieved. Whether the setting up of the RE team, bringing in of new communication strategies, or the re-energised reviews and monitoring of both religious education and Catholic life, all have taken the Catholic ethos and provision to a higher level. The mission statement was reviewed and is now lived out in policies, curriculum, behaviour, leadership and partnership. It reads 'Trust in God and trust in yourself'. The expanded summary reads 'At St Catherine's, we live the Gospel, work together, are for others, embrace diversity, prepare for the future, discover our purpose, cherish and challenge – all with Christ at the centre' and these elements were all on display during the inspection. The governors have shown engagement and support in this journey, providing guidance and clarification.

What should the school do to develop further the Catholic life of the school?

- Lead pupils to encounter and experience for themselves the richness of Catholic teaching alongside direction towards it
- Develop a spirituality in the school which is more personal and autonomous
- Continue to develop the 'RE Leaders' initiative, maintaining the opportunity for the Year 6 pupils to lead younger pupils in prayer