



Diocese of Westminster

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

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DFE Number:(313/ 3504)

URN Number: 102528

Headteacher: Mr Farley Marsh

Chair of Governors: Mrs J.Corley

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: 11 October 2012
Date of previous inspection: June 2007

Reporting Inspector: Mr S Flood

Introduction

The inspector would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection. The inspector spent one day in school, visited 9 lessons, observed a class liturgy, a whole school assembly and also carried out interviews with school staff, pupils and governors. Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons, examination of school documents, and attendance at religious services where possible.

The Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Isleworth was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Archbishop of Westminster. The inspectors are appointed by 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.

Description of School

St Mary's is a one form entry school in the London Borough of Hounslow and the locality of West London.

The school serves the parish of Our Lady of Sorrows and St.Bridget's, Isleworth, St.Margaret's of Scotland, St Margaret's and St Vincent de Paul, Osterley.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is significantly below average at 0.7%.

There are 292 pupils currently on roll, this classifies the school as larger than the average sized primary school.

There is one pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, this is well below the national average.

100% of the pupils are Catholic.

The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well above the national average.

The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is above the national average.

There are 16 teachers in the school 14 of whom are Catholic. 7 of the teachers have the CCRS or other Catholic qualification.

The Mission Statement of the school states:

Our school family at St Mary's wants this to be a safe, caring, creative and happy place, where we all have a fair chance to learn and grow together and to do the best we can. We do this by knowing and loving Jesus more and more everyday and by following his teachings in a joyful way.

Key for inspection grades.

Grade 1: Outstanding;*

Grade 1: Very Good;

Grade 2: Good;

Grade 3: Satisfactory;

Grade 4: Causing Concern.

A. Curriculum 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?

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

Grade [2]

The Curriculum Directory is being used in the development of the RE curriculum in this school. There is evidence of planning to adapt the Curriculum Directory to pupils' needs and to show links to the Directory, for example Revelation and Church. The overall effectiveness of religious education is good. The use and implementation of the Curriculum Directory is in progress and currently provides a good programme of religious education across the school. The school is currently developing new curriculum units to support the Year of Faith. Resources are appropriate and links are made to other areas of learning such as other faiths.

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

Grade [2]

Progress and attainment in religious education is good. Pupils' spoken and oral knowledge of religious education is very good and pupils are keen and eager to share their knowledge and understanding. Pupil attainment on entry at Nursery is broadly average. Evidence in books, data provided and other work on display around the school shows that pupils make good progress at every level, while progress at the end of key stage 2 is very good. Progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is good. Pupils and staff are growing in knowledge of the Levels of Attainment and this is a school priority in this year to develop even further. School is striving at present to attain even higher levels of religious literacy. Most pupils make good progress in relation to their prior abilities. Pupils in discussions around the school were articulate, friendly and clearly enjoyed their current topics in religious education.

The quality of teaching

Grade [2]

Quality of teaching is very variable across the school. It varies widely from requiring improvement to outstanding. Teaching quality is being adversely affected by the length and timetabling of lessons right across the school and this requires urgent review. Overall the quality of teaching is judged to be good. As a result of this good teaching most pupils are achieving age expectation levels with a high standard of pupil response and engagement. Children get a very good start in the Reception Classes where teaching is very good. Teaching in upper Key Stage 2 is mostly outstanding. Teachers have a strong subject knowledge overall. ICT is used effectively in some lessons to enhance the teaching of RE with some very creative use of iPads seen in one class.

Homework is being used to support pupil learning in class.
Pupil behaviour seen in all lessons was very good and engagement and enthusiasm was high.
Teaching assistants and support staff played a key role in all lessons seen.
Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and quite accurately, especially with older pupils.
Marking is developing well and children are informed what they need to do to improve even further.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade [1]

The leadership of the subject is very good and is aiming for continuous improvement and high standards in religious education.
The head teacher gives a very strong lead to the further development of religious education in this school. He is well assisted by a good senior management team.
The RE subject leader is very experienced and is generally effective in ensuring that RE is well resourced around the school.
There is a clear enthusiastic vision and commitment to the educational mission of the Church.
The day to day management of staff is well organised.
Regular monitoring and peer observation ensure quality teaching at most levels and has equally identified areas for improvement.
Assessment for learning informs teaching and most staff share high expectations of pupils.
Performance management is becoming very effective in this school and is based on the new Standards for Teachers document. This is challenging under performance where it exists and all staff are expected to support the Catholic ethos and policies of the school.
Targets are currently linked to improving pupils' levels of attainment and staff understanding of the new curriculum.
There is a good range of resources for religious education and care and attention is given to the overall learning environment in religious education with some high quality displays seen around the school.

What has improved in curriculum religious education since the last inspection and what should the school do to further improve in curriculum religious education?

The last inspection identified only assessment as an area to be developed. This work is continuing in the light of new diocesan guidelines.

To improve even further the school needs to:

Review the quality of teaching to raise standards further so that there are more good and outstanding lessons in religious education right across the school.

Urgently review the timetables to ensure that lessons are of appropriate duration and at an appropriate time of the day for the ages and overall development of the children.

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

Overall Grade: [2]

The overall effectiveness of religious education is good.
The school is currently moving towards using the model units from the Year of Faith.

The use and implementation of the Curriculum Directory is progressing and provides a good programme of religious education across the key stages. Planning is good and is being mapped to the Curriculum Directory.

Pupil attainment in religious education is good at both key stages and progress from Reception years onwards is sound.

Teaching seen during this inspection was variable but overall judged to be good and equally most pupils achieve at age expectation levels.

Teachers have mostly good subject knowledge and structures are in place to support and encourage newer teachers. Staff development is well planned in this school.

The leadership of the subject from the head is very good, it is forward thinking and is focused on future development.

The school self-evaluation provides an accurate diagnosis and realistic awareness of the needs of the school with regard to religious education.

The place and importance of religious education in the life of the school is evidenced by the leadership of the subject from the head, the senior leadership team and governors and also of all the staff who work in this school.

B. The school as a Catholic Community

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

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum - time, resources, budget

Grade [2]

10% of curriculum time is devoted to the teaching of religious education across all key stages every week.

The lessons are not however evenly distributed across the week and are in many cases not appropriately timed for the ages and understanding of the children. This needs to be urgently reviewed.

Teachers have good subject knowledge of religious education in accordance with the Curriculum Directory for England and Wales.

Other faiths are studied within the overall curriculum.

The school allocates a reasonable and comparable budget to teaching about the Catholic faith and resources are chosen with care to cover all areas of the curriculum.

In- service training is well planned for all staff.

Recent training has taken place on the new levels of attainment and on the Year of Faith units.

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

Grade [1]

Catholic worship is very good in this school and is given a high profile.

Prayer and worship are integral to the life of the school and a key part of every school celebration.

A very good whole school assembly was seen during this inspection, led by the head teacher with music and input from the children.

Music, drama and art are being used effectively to enhance prayer and worship, starting at a very young age in the Reception classes.

Pupils' spiritual development is enabled through the very good opportunities they have for quiet reflection and class discussion.

Pupils' spoken and oral knowledge of the Catholic faith is very good.

The celebration of the Eucharist and other sacramental celebrations are offered at key times during the liturgical year and the parish priest is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school.

Parents are invited to attend Masses and assemblies throughout the school year.

Prayer, liturgy and Catholic worship are a strength of the school.

The commitment and contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice.
Grade [2]

The school does have an understanding of the importance of service and support for the disadvantaged in the wider world.

From an early age children become aware of how religious beliefs and actions shape daily lives.

The school council were able to share some of the work they did to support CAFOD and other charities at home, such as Marie Curie Cancer Care. Greater awareness of the importance of longer term commitment to these charities needs to be developed.

Opportunities for global citizenship and links are being developed in the school and this area requires further work. The school itself has recognised this in its own self evaluation.

Visits arranged to local places of worship are taking place.

The teaching and understanding of other faiths is also being taken seriously by the school.

Respect and tolerance among all pupils is evident and behaviour is very good as a result, at all times during the day.

The Catholic values of service to the needy does underpin its activities and pupils are growing in their understanding of the call to justice and service as part of being a member of a Catholic community and school..

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 [1]

The school sees itself as a welcoming community in all aspects of daily life.

The leadership of the school is fully committed to developing the school's role within the diocese.

The support from parents, as evidenced by the return of a large number of questionnaires, was very supportive and understanding in most cases. Parents write very well about the school and its work towards educating their children in all aspects of their Catholic faith.

The school works very closely with parents and carers through meetings, newsletters and regular attendance at school functions.

Parents are encouraged to participate in all school events, and this is also greatly appreciated and commented upon.

The school has very close links with the adjacent parish and recognises the parish as the main experience of Church for Catholics and explores ways to engage with the parish and also other parishes from which pupils come.

The religious education co-ordinator attends Diocesan training and meetings.

Partnership with the Diocesan Bishop is experienced through the schools participation in the services offered through the Education Service such as conferences and briefings.

All policies and practices follow Diocesan guidelines.

The whole school community share a collaborative vision of the Catholic nature of education.

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

Grade [1]

The Mission Statement of the school states:

"Our school family at St.Mary's wants this to be a safe, caring, creative and happy place, where we all have a fair chance to learn and grow together and to do the best we can. We do this by knowing and loving Jesus more and everyday, and by following his teachings in a joyful way."

Leadership demonstrates a very strong commitment to the mission of the Church in education.

Governance is very good and is kept well informed about current and future practice.

Governors are influential and provide a very good balance of challenge and support.

The school conducts a wide range of monitoring activities relating to its provision and outcomes.

Their analysis and self-evaluation provides a mostly accurate picture of the school's strengths and key areas for development.

In light of this inspection this evaluation now needs reviewing.

What has improved since the last inspection and what should the school do to further develop the Catholic life of the school ?

No issues for improvement were identified in the previous report.

To further develop the Catholic life of the school the school needs to:

Review its practice and further enhance its contribution towards the long term Common Good both at home and overseas.

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 overall effectiveness of The Catholic life of the school is very good in the following ways:

Religious education is highly valued as integral to the life of the school as it seeks ways to implement fully the Bishops' Conference requirements.

Resources, staffing and accommodation are good for the needs of this school community.

Worship and prayer are very good in the school and pupils are actively engaged in both the planning and preparation of liturgies.

Links with parents, the parish and Diocese are being reviewed and ways to strengthen them even further are being developed.

Parents are mostly very positive about the Catholic life and experience offered by the school.

The Head leads by knowledge, practice and example in developing the overall Catholic life of the school. He is well supported by a strong and committed Chair of Governors.

Leadership at all levels demonstrates a strong vision of Catholic education and is striving to ensure that this is put into practice.

Governance is very good indeed and governors are kept fully involved in developing and enhancing further the Catholic life of the school.