



Diocese of Westminster

INSPECTION REPORT

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

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DCSF Number: 202 3655

URN: 100048

Headteacher: Mrs J. Jackson

Chair of Governors: Ms M. Harvey

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: 25th March 2010

Date of previous inspection: 21st September 2006

Reporting Inspector: Mrs M. Betts

Description of School

Our Lady Catholic primary School is a one form entry school with nursery provision for pupils aged 3 to 11 years. There are 155 pupils on roll, 83% of whom are Catholic. There are 12 teachers in the school of whom 5 (42%) are Catholic. The school serves the parish of Our Lady of Hal. The majority of pupils live within the parish. This is an area of high deprivation and a high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school's intake reflects the local community it serves. The vast majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Nearly half of pupils have a first language other than English with approximately 27 different languages being spoken. The school shares a site, building and nursery with a Church of England primary school. The school has formed a collaboration with a Catholic school in Kilburn and is now being led by an executive headteacher on a part-time basis.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

The effectiveness Our Lady School as a Catholic school is satisfactory overall with some good features. The school is concentrating on raising the profile of its Catholic identity and improving religious education teaching and learning. The liturgical life of the school is good. The school provides a caring, safe and purposeful environment where each person is valued, respected and listened to. The relationships within the school community are good. The pupils explained "everyone in our school is caring, warming and kind hearted". The school provides good provision for spiritual and moral development of pupils and this is reflected in their behaviour and attitudes. All staff are committed to upholding the principles of the Catholic faith and to improving the standards of education. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and develop their understanding of the Catholic faith.

Grade 3

Improvement since the last inspection

The last diocesan inspection report described the school as marked by a family atmosphere. The issues for improvement related to making 'Friendship Week' with pupils from the linked Church of England school a regular feature and developing a consistent approach to managing challenging behaviour. The school has made sound progress with these targets. Although Friendship Week has not continued, the leadership of the school is promoting new links with the adjoining school that should lead to renewal of relationships and a strong partnership. Behaviour of pupils is now good and they are aware of the rules. Staff implement the school's behaviour policy and promote a range of different intervention strategies.

Grade 3

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

The executive headteacher and religious education co-ordinator have a good overall view of the school's strengths and development needs. The school leadership has formed and begun work to implement a comprehensive action plan with rigorous timings to raise the standard of education within the school. The religious education development plan is linked to the general school improvement plan and has objectives to ensure that the religious education co-ordinator is fully trained to carry out her role. The Catholic self-evaluation document is accurate. Staff are committed to the success of the school. The school's capacity to improve is good.

Grade 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve religious education teaching and learning by:
Matching learning tasks to each pupil's individual needs;
Improving teachers' subject knowledge especially for those new to Catholic education;
Use assessment information to inform subject planning and to provide challenging targets;
Regularly monitor lessons giving teachers targets which are made the focus of the next observation.
 - Engage pupils in planning, preparing and leading worship.
 - Engage pupils in independent learning activities within religious education.
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The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are steadily improving. Leadership is focused on promoting the faith development of pupils and raising standards. The school's Catholic nature has been made explicit around the building by the use of high quality displays. Art is used well to promote pupils' spiritual development. The mission statement "God is with us ... in excellence., empowerment... and ...enjoyment" is known well and underpins all the school is striving for and working towards. Governors are kept well informed and plan to fulfil their role in monitoring all areas of school life. The care and well-being of pupils is a priority in the school. Leadership promotes well pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils value the caring attitude of the staff who listen to them and offer help with their problems. Pupils undertake responsibilities such as looking after the younger children. Success of achievement in work and behaviour is recognised and celebrated. The school's partnership with parents is good. The school and parish work together well.

Grade 3

The Prayer Life of the School

Prayer is an integral part of each school day. It is effective in giving pupils a variety of experiences using traditional prayers and joining adult led prayers. Pupils sometimes write their own prayers but do not use these within collective worship. The school has a well-established pattern of collective worship that follows the liturgical year. The parish priest makes a significant contribution to the sacramental life of the school by leading regular prayer services and Masses. Pupils are involved by doing readings and prayers and they occasionally lead class assemblies. Pupils enjoy collective worship most when they can contribute, for example through drama. Older pupils could be more involved in planning and leading prayer sessions. Collective worship observed was effectively delivered using visual material to illustrate the theme and engage the interest of pupils. Time for pupils to reflect on the message and apply it to their own lives was not given. During collective worship pupils listen and behave well. The high quality of the singing enhances the worship. The worship themes promote pupils' spiritual and moral development. Following full implementation of the new policy, the provision and impact of the prayer life of the school is to be monitored regularly.

Grade 3

How effectively does the school /college promote community cohesion?

The school is a welcoming, inclusive community where all members are valued. Pupils' different backgrounds are acknowledged though as yet the diversity of cultures represented is not used within the curriculum or celebrated. The composition of staff reflects the composition of the local community. Pupils share a common sense of belonging and show responsibility to each other. Parents are kept informed about school activities and invited to share celebrations. The school is building links with other local schools to enable pupils to work with others from different backgrounds. The school contributes to the local parish, for instance by displaying pupils' work in church. They raise funds for local, national and global charities. The school is supporting the education of two children abroad and is linked to a local organisation to do this. The religious education curriculum includes some study of other world faiths.

Grade 3

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Pupils make acceptable progress in the school and meet age appropriate levels of attainment. They are developing an understanding of the life and teaching of the Catholic faith and are beginning to be able to apply this to their own lives and experience. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their books are well presented and evidence a good coverage of the curriculum. Written work shows a range of different activities including work from scripture. However independent learning by older pupils either individually or in groups is not at present part of religious education tasks. Pupils enjoy religious education lessons most when linked either to practical activities or to discussions of ethical issues. Pupil behaviour is good.

Grade 3

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Teaching is satisfactory with good aspects observed. Where teaching is best, a variety of teaching styles are used, and the tasks provided are practical and motivate pupils' interest. Teachers' planning is thorough with clear learning intentions which are mostly made explicit to the pupils. Visual presentations and talking partners are used well to promote interest and develop confidence in ideas. The activities planned consolidated the pupils' thinking. Differentiation was observed during the lessons but not evidenced in books. The teaching assistants are used well to support individuals and group work. Teachers have recently made assessments at the end of topics and given pupils levels relating to national expectations. Tracking of individual pupils is beginning to take place. Marking of work is affirmative and occasionally led pupils to think further about their response. Parents are now given information of future religious education topics and how they could help with the learning at home.

Grade 3

Quality of the Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is sound and suitable for the age and abilities of the learners. It fulfils the requirement of the Bishops' Conference. 10% of curriculum time is used for religious education following the "Here I Am" programme as well as for specific work celebrating the

liturgical year. Pupils recognise religious education as an important subject. Tasks consolidate learning but more creative and independent activities such as research and presentation of findings in creative formats, would further challenge and engage pupils. The school is planning to use visits and visitors as extra resources to promote learning. Religious education is occasionally linked with other areas of the curriculum such as Literacy, Art, Drama and with Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Other faiths are taught throughout the year. Good religious education displays with key vocabulary contribute to the quality of learning.

Grade 3

Leadership and management of Religious Education

Leadership and management of religious education are steadily improving and good practices are beginning to be implemented. The religious education co-ordinator, with the strong support of the executive headteacher, has a clear vision for improvement and gives a high profile to this subject and its contribution to the educational mission of the Church. She guides and supports the teachers effectively with their religious education planning and subject knowledge. A formal process of monitoring planning, lessons and books with appropriate feedback to teachers has been devised and will ensure that these areas of religious education are evaluated. The school plans to moderate assessments and analyse the data produced. The curriculum and teaching satisfactorily promotes equality of opportunity and addresses discrimination. One teacher holds the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies. The budget for religious education and worship is below that allocated to other core subjects. Resources for delivery of the curriculum are adequate and new resources are constantly being purchased.

Grade 3