



# Diocese of Westminster

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## INSPECTION REPORT

### **Mount Carmel Primary School**

Little Ealing Lane, Ealing W5 4EA

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DCSF Number: 307 3500

URN Number: 101919

Headteacher: Joan Harte

Chair of Governors: Patrick Cogan

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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

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Date of inspection: 22 January 2010  
Date of previous inspection: 18 October 2006

Reporting Inspector: Mrs S Nolan

## **Description of School**

Mount Carmel Primary is a mixed two form entry school serving families in the parish of Northfields. It has recently completed a major building project so that all pupils are housed on one site. Most pupils come from the parish and there are strong links with the local parish church. There are 464 pupils on roll and all but one pupil are baptised Catholics. There are 113 children in the Nursery and Reception years. Of the 19 full and part-time teachers, 77% (13.5) are Catholics and 9 hold the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) or other Catholic qualifications. The school's mission centres around the gospel and its Catholic vision for education: 'I have come so they may have life and have it to the full'.

A similar proportion of pupils to that nationally have a home language other than English. The majority of pupils have White European backgrounds. Those few children at the early stages of learning English have mostly Polish, Italian or French as their home language. The proportion of the school population with significant barriers to learning is lower than usual. Of these 52 pupils, four have a statement of special educational need. Few pupils are eligible for a free school meal. Attainment on entry is generally average.

### **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school**

Mount Carmel is an outstanding school with a strong Catholic ethos. The school's clear-sighted and dynamic leadership has a real sense of its mission to ensure that pupils have the very best opportunities for future success within a caring, Christ-centred community. A major strength is the very close links with the local parish. In conjunction with the parish priest and governors, Mount Carmel strives to integrate its day-to-day work with the Church's wider mission. Standards overall are above average although English still outstrips Religious Education at the highest levels of performance. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching. Checks on pupils' performance and progress are rigorous so that pupils and parents are accurately and regularly informed on how well they are doing. Religious education is very well planned within the excellent curriculum. Prayer and worship underpin the Catholic life of the school so that pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. Not only do pupils behave well but they demonstrate a genuine sense of belonging to and responsibility for their own and the wider community. Pupils are helped to understand the Church's global mission through their support for a number of charities, including that for local homeless and overseas projects in Africa and India. The school is very well led by the headteacher, senior team and governors who work tirelessly to nurture and develop this flourishing Catholic community.

**Grade 1**

### **Improvement since the last inspection**

Mount Carmel has gone from strength to strength since the last inspection. It has made great strides in improving its practice and procedures for checking the pupils' performance and progress in religious education. There is a regular cycle of monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice. The scheme of work is under continuous review so that as issues arise, it is adapted to meet the needs of the pupils and to raise their performance in religious studies. Pupils now have wide opportunities to understand their immediate society and the world picture both within Christian communities and other faiths. A programme for teaching other faiths is well established. Mount Carmel has also made progress on a number of other fronts. Not least

has been its success in involving parents in the work of the school. They are welcomed into assemblies and have many formal and informal opportunities through which to engage with the school to support their children. The prayer life of the school has also strengthened to include a range of traditional Catholic prayers and devotions such as the rosary, the May procession in honour of Our Lady and the Stations of the Cross.

**Grade 1**

### **The capacity of the school community to improve and develop**

Mount Carmel has demonstrated its strong capacity to improve further through its very good progress since the last inspection. The dedication of its predominantly Catholic staff, the commitment of its non-Catholic staff to further study of the Faith and the close links with the parish and other local clergy all support its current drive for excellence. The curriculum leader for Religious Education, working closely with the headteacher, is striving to develop even further all aspects of the school's Catholic practice. There is clear evidence of on-going efforts to raise and maintain the quality of teaching and to pursue strategies to widen even further the pupils' understanding of their position within the universal Catholic Church. The religious education provision is reviewed regularly as part of the on-going robust self-evaluation. The school is confident in its own identity and is able to share its strengths and its pupils' talents both within the Catholic community but also with those of different religious and cultural traditions. The school has rightly identified that its next step is to take forward plans to assess more accurately the extent to which pupils learn from the Catholic Faith.

**Grade 1**

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- In order to raise the pupils' attainment further in Religious Education, take forward plans to develop more accurate assessments of how well pupils learn in Attainment Target 2, *Learning from the Catholic Faith*.

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## **The Catholic Life of the School**

### **Leadership and Management**

Mount Carmel is exceptionally well led and managed. The headteacher's dedicated leadership of this Catholic community is very ably supported by the senior team and governors. There is a clearly shared sense of purpose to promote the Catholic identity of the school. Local clergy regularly celebrate mass for staff, pupils and parents and are involved in whole-school reconciliation services. High expectations are at the heart of the school's improvement since the last inspection. As a result, the school provides high quality care and education for all groups of children. The leadership team ensures there are excellent opportunities to strengthen links with parents. The contact with the parish helps the school not only to sustain outstanding pastoral care but also to keep in touch with hard-to-reach groups within the community. The many enrichment activities, visits and clubs are much valued by pupils and their families. Lines of accountability are clear and the school has a very accurate understanding of the impact of its

provision for the advancement of this Catholic community. It knows its strengths and areas for improvement very well and is working on refining its assessment procedures in religious education even further.

**Grade 1**

### **The Prayer Life of the School**

The Church's liturgical cycle is well integrated into the life of the school. The provision for prayer life, liturgy and collective worship is outstanding. Pupils are fully involved in the planning of the Mass, both in school and in the parish, and in assemblies, by organising readers, singers and musicians as well as servers. Daily prayers in class groups and in religious education lessons are linked to the Church's calendar. The prayer tables in each classroom reflect the colours of the liturgical season. The pupils' understanding of the importance of prayer was clearly demonstrated in the particularly successful assembly for the Week of Christian Unity seen during the inspection. Year 6 not only showed their understanding of the range of Christian groups but also drew on Church history to show the roots of the *Credo*. They very impressively used their musical skills to lead the school in hymns from Christian cultures around the world. The school environment is well enhanced by art work and other religious artefacts. Display in classrooms and around the corridors, along with interesting resources on the prayer tables, provide pupils with stimuli for thought and reflection. Each class is named after a biblical figure. There is a calm and peaceful ethos throughout the school that is reflected in the pupils' very good behaviour and consideration for others.

**Grade 1**

### **How effectively does the school promote community cohesion?**

A real strength of Mount Carmel is its determination to include all pupils and their families and to contribute as fully as possible to supporting cohesion in its local community. Pupils have excellent opportunities to enhance their knowledge of other faiths through, for example, the study of Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism. They are able to visit places of worship beyond those of the local Christian communities. Out-of-hours meetings and clubs provide opportunities for parents as well as pupils to learn the languages and culture of the many groups that make up Mount Carmel. Pupils, for example, through the school's international links, can grow in their understanding of life in India, Africa and other parts of Europe. Sporting and musical links with other schools in the locality ensure pupils get to know those around them.

**Grade 1**

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## **Religious Education**

### **Achievement and Standards in Religious Education**

The achievements and standards in Religious Education are good. Pupils make good progress in Religious Education by the end of Year 6. Standards are above average in both Religious Education and in English. In discussion, and in their workbooks, pupils show a thorough understanding and knowledge of Catholic faith but also of the traditions of other major religions. Pupils' written work is of a good standard and pupils of all age groups and abilities engage well in learning. Key vocabulary is well promoted. Pupils in Year 6, for example, were well able to explain what constitutes a covenant after their study of 'promises'. Progression in understanding

aspects of the Mass and traditional Catholic prayers is excellent because of the carefully constructed curriculum. Pupils, at their own levels, know the pattern of the liturgical year, are familiar with the scriptures, and are clear as to what is expected of a Catholic community. The school has rightly identified that pupils appear to attain more successfully in learning about Catholic Faith than in learning from it.

**Grade 2**

### **Teaching and learning in Religious Education**

The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is good. Pupils report that lessons are interesting because of the many and varied activities they experience. Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent and contribute greatly to pupils' obvious enjoyment in learning. The use of new technologies and a wide range of other resources were real strengths of lessons seen during the inspection. Teachers have a very sound knowledge of the Catholic faith and lessons are meticulously planned to ensure that pupils really understand what they should know by the end of a session. This enables pupils to reflect on their own progress. Well-targeted questioning, together with a classroom ethos that encourages queries and explanations, also supports pupils' language and communication skills. In a Year 1 lesson on 'families', children were encouraged effectively to express their understanding in both words and pictures through making a collage and through interviewing their peers. In an Early Years session on the Christian duty to help the sick, children successfully explored how they could help the sick through sharing toys. Marking is generally helpful and regular and teachers moderate and level pupils' work increasingly accurately, sharing the information with pupils through well-considered written comments.

**Grade 2**

### **Quality of the Curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is excellent and meets the needs and aspirations of all learners. The Religious Education department provides a rich curriculum which fully meets the Diocesan requirements with regard to curriculum time. It is well supplemented by daily prayer and worship. Schemes of work are carefully constructed to ensure progression through year groups. Because work is well matched to pupils' earlier learning, it contributes very effectively to promoting not only their Catholic faith but also to their basic and personal skills. All pupils are taught to respect other faiths and cultures and pupils are genuinely interested in visits to other places of worship. Pupils' homework at times is also thoughtfully planned to actively involve parents as, for example, in a task on Baptism.

**Grade 1**

### **Leadership and management of Religious Education**

There is very good leadership and management of religious education. The subject leader is exceptionally well supported by the headteacher and by the senior team. The quality of provision in religious education is a high priority in the school. Staff care deeply about their pupils' spiritual development and are very supportive of the subject leaders' vision for the curriculum. Self-critical but creative monitoring and evaluation of the subject area is at the heart of the school's excellent progress since the last inspection. Staff are well guided in their expectations of what the pupils can achieve through a portfolio of high attaining pupils' work for each year group. The subject leader has a strong sense of the Church's educational mission and shares this with all staff who display a genuine sense of spiritual purpose in their day-to-day

work. In the very well kept learning environment, the subject leader ensures that resources and staff are deployed very effectively so that all pupils are included fully in the religious life of the school.

**Grade 1**