



Diocese of Westminster

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery

Herlwyn Avenue, Ruislip, Middlesex. HA4 6EZ

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DFE Number: 312/3405

URN Number: 102426

Headteacher: Mr D. Manley

Chair of Governors: Mr P. Corthorne

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: 4th July 2013

Date of previous inspection: 8th November 2008

Reporting Inspectors: Mrs P Brannigan
Mrs T. Cleugh

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 seventeen lessons, attended one Mass 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 Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Ruislip 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 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.

Description of School

The school is a three form entry primary school with nursery in Ruislip in the London borough of Hillingdon. The school serves the parishes of Most Sacred Heart Ruislip, St Thomas More Eastcote and St Paul's Harefield. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 99%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations or other faiths is 1%.

There are 674 pupils on roll, with 13 pupils who have a statement of Special Educational Need. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is below average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is also below average. There is a below average rate of families claiming free school meals.

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1: Outstanding;*
Grade 1: Very Good;
Grade 2: Good;
Grade 3: Requires improvement;
Grade 4: Causing Concern.

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

Overall Grade: I

The overall effectiveness of curriculum religious education is very good and meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory which forms the basis for the programmes of study. The quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress are very good. Pupils make very good progress through the challenge and expectations of their teachers. Effective structures are in place to ensure good quality teaching and monitoring. Self-evaluation is accurate and indicates a very good knowledge of the school and the development areas for religious education. Teachers have good subject knowledge and there are very good structures in place to support new members of staff. There is a commitment to on-going professional development to enable staff to improve and develop the teaching of religious education. The headteacher, deputy and subject leader give religious education a high priority which permeates all aspects of the life of the school.

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

A number of improvements in classroom religious education have been made since the last inspection. There are now explicit links to the Curriculum Directory in planning which has led to improved teaching. Procedures for assessment and moderation have been improved and include opportunities for pupils to self-assess. The religious education curriculum has been adapted to meet the changing needs of the school.

To further improve classroom religious education in the light of the new framework, the school should:

1. Further develop the use of questioning and marking in religious education to enable pupils to identify the next steps in their learning.
2. Continue to support and develop staff subject knowledge of religious education as they use diocesan materials to plan and teach.
3. Review the monitoring of teaching to ensure all lessons are planned for pace and include activities for every level of need.

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

Grade I*

The content of curriculum religious education meets all the requirements of the Curriculum Directory. The four strands are used to very good effect and are clearly identified in lesson planning. The school is beginning to use the 'Year of Faith' in some year groups and plans to use them across the school in September. All planning and lessons are cross referenced to the areas of the Curriculum Directory being covered. Staff are very well supported by the subject leader and senior leadership in their medium term planning. They are helped to identify the links to the Curriculum Directory and the resources needed. Regular staff training and informal support has increased teachers' knowledge and confidence. There is regular monitoring of the curriculum, planning, workbooks and pupil learning. There is evidence of imaginative planning to meet the needs of all groups of pupils.

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

Grade I

Pupil achievement, attainment and progress in religious education are very good. Pupils enter the school around the national average and make very good progress from Foundation Stage onwards. This has been achieved by careful monitoring and tracking, a significant investment in resources, staff training and use of support staff. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards generally meet diocesan expectations. Lessons observed provided evidence of very well motivated pupils who are actively engaged in their own learning. Pupils make very good progress and are encouraged to become independent learners. They take pride in their work and respond well to their teachers' advice on how to improve. At Key Stage 2 a range of sources are quoted within pupils' written work including scripture, tradition, creation and experience. There is evidence that pupils are attaining a very good standard in knowledge and understanding of religion and are developing an ability to reflect on meaning.

The quality of teaching

Grade I

The overall quality of teaching is very good. Lessons observed across the school during the inspection were at least good and some were outstanding. They also gave evidence of high teacher expectations for all groups. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use a wide range of strategies to engage the full range of ability. Workbooks are very well presented, marking is positive and developmental and some include questions to probe understanding and deepen knowledge. During the inspection almost all class teachers used time well although a few lessons lacked pace. Pupils are given opportunities to develop new skills and build on previous learning. A range of cross-curricular activities including art, IT, and role-play are used to engage pupils in their learning. Tasks are appropriately pitched to enable pupils to express their religious literacy and there is very good challenge especially for more able pupils. Twelve teachers hold the CCRS certificate or equivalent. All teachers have good access to in-service training both in-house and provided by the Diocese. Regular monitoring of teaching is in place followed by discussion and support as necessary. Good assessment procedures have enabled teachers to plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Parents are able to support their children's learning through regular curriculum newsletter, the use of Redemptorist Catholic homework diaries, invitations to liturgies, class masses and other events. .

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade I*

The leadership and management of religious education is outstanding and has a positive impact on the life of the school. This is because the subject leader, headteacher and deputy together ensure that clear vision and direction for religious education is shared by the whole school community. The children's version of the mission statement, 'where we love and learn with Jesus' is well known by pupils. School leaders ensure that very good support is given to new teachers and teaching assistants. High expectations for staff and pupils ensure that religious education is at the core of the curriculum. Staff are very well supported in their teaching through in-service training and frequent continued professional development. There is a very good range of resources and the learning environment for religious education is outstanding. Religious education is given priority in the school improvement plan which clearly identifies areas for development and how they are to be achieved. Members of the governing body are familiar with current developments in religious education which enables them to support and challenge the school.

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 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: I*

The school is very effective in developing pupils' experience in the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing. Worship and prayer are central to the life of the school and are well planned and resourced. Pupils are given wide experiences of the richness of Catholic traditions and sacramental celebrations are offered at key times of the school year. Religious education is valued and recognised as the core of the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to reach their full potential academically, spiritually and morally by all staff. They are also given opportunities to become involved in social justice issues. The governing body includes members who have a strong commitment to the school's vision of itself as a Catholic community. Good links with parents, parish and Diocese demonstrate the school's commitment to partnership and its clear identity as a diocesan Catholic school.

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

Since the last inspection the school has maintained and enhanced the cycle of liturgies and Eucharistic celebrations following extensive building works. There are also increased opportunities for prayer for the whole community, including staff, families and days of reflection. The beautiful school chapel has given pupils increased opportunities for reflection and meditation, and is well used. Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel provided a focus for reflection for all members of the school community. All staff have been well supported as the school implements the new Diocesan Framework and the requirements of the Curriculum Directory.

To further develop the Catholic life of the school newly appointed senior leaders should:

- ensure opportunities for pupil initiated worship are in place and pupils should be given additional opportunities to write and include their own prayers in liturgical celebrations.

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

Grade I*

Religious education receives 10% of curriculum time and has a larger budget than other core subjects. Resources are very good and there is an outstanding learning environment through displays in classrooms and other areas of the school. Each classroom has a prayer table which is used as a focus during classroom prayers. School leadership offers strong support in developing and reviewing the quality of religious education. All staff receive in-service support and training relating to the Catholic life of the school. Members of the governing body have received training to enable them to provide support in reviewing and developing the place of religious education. There is a planned programme of masses and liturgies.

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

Grade I

The school's provision for prayer and worship is very good. Pupils are given opportunities for prayer, meditation and reflection within the Catholic tradition and examples were seen during the inspection. Pupils are enabled to participate and contribute to a wide range of worship and would welcome further opportunities. The liturgical year forms the basis for many of the prayer and worship opportunities. During the inspection a celebration Mass for Year 3 pupils, who had recently made their first communion, was attended by a large number of parents and families, many of whom expressed their appreciation of the way the school supported their children's prayer life. Pupils acted as altar servers, read bidding prayers and led the offertory procession. Singing was very good and all pupils participated with respect, reverence and enthusiasm. Religious education lessons often include prayers and sometimes end with a simple liturgy. Parish led sacramental preparation is supported by the school. Spiritual development is nurtured through the whole curriculum and religious education which permeates the wider life of the school. Parental questionnaires indicated that parents were very positive about invitations to Masses, liturgies and other school celebrations.

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

Grade I*

All members of the school community recognise the gospel call to service and the importance of support for those in need. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to support local and national charities including Cafod and Westminster Catholic Children's Society. There are links with a school in Nepal as well as schools of different faiths in the local area, through the 'Three Faiths Forum' shared futures programme. These links provide opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their own cultural background as well as respecting that of other groups with whom they interact in society. A link with a local Special School has enabled pupils to participate in a 'Signing' choir and perform alongside children with special needs. Pupils engage in activities to raise awareness of needs as well as fundraise. Conversations with members of the school council and older pupils indicate that they are given many opportunities to support their school, including as 'Young Leaders' and Junior Road Safety Officers. All pupils are growing in their understanding that responding to the call to justice and service is part of being a member of a Catholic community. Behaviour and relationships within the school are very good.

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 recognises that working in partnership with parents and parish as well as the wider diocesan community is central to its mission. There are outstanding links with local parishes and the priests are regular visitors to the school, celebrating the Eucharist and liturgies as well as offering pastoral support to staff and pupils. Pupils also visit the local church to further develop their understanding of a Catholic way of life. The school works very closely with parents and carers through meetings and questionnaires, which indicate that families are appreciative of all that is done to enable their children to grow in faith. There are also outstanding links with the Diocese through participation in training offered through the Westminster Education Service for both staff and governors. Senior staff attend diocesan conferences and play a major role in deanery and diocesan

moderation sessions. The headteacher has also offered support to other deanery schools at the request of the diocese.

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

Grade I*

The leadership of the school is committed to the Church's mission in education and demonstrates this by providing a curriculum with spiritual and moral development at its heart. All leaders ensure that the Catholic life of the school is central to all its work. Pupils are given many opportunities to know the life and teachings of Jesus and the traditions of the Catholic Church. There are regular opportunities for developing the prayer life of all members of the community leading to a school with Christ at the centre. Leaders share a vision of the nature of Catholic education and work with staff, pupils and families to move the school forward. All aspects of school life are underpinned by the mission statement. Each class has a prayer focus and a display area which emphasises the importance of religious education. Governors have a clear understanding of their role in safeguarding and promoting the Catholic life of the school.



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Overall Grade I

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

Grade I*

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

Grade I

The quality of teaching

Grade I

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade I*

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 I*

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

Grade I*

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

Grade I

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

Grade I*

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

Grade I*