



Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School

Greenford Road, Greenford, London UB6 9AW

Date of inspection: 2-3 April 2014

A. Classroom Religious Education

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

Overall Grade I*

The overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy is outstanding. The pupils enjoy talking about what they are learning in classroom religious education and explaining how it applies to their life. They benefit from outstanding classroom religious education lessons and in particular benefit from the well organised and personalised access to the content and resources through the virtual learning environment created in the school called FROG. The pupils achieve excellent results in their religious education examinations. The leadership of the religious education department is very effective and the experienced and qualified staff deliver outstanding lessons, supported by a rich resource bank. Pupils with special educational needs are supported with tailored learning schemes and make good progress. The monitoring of pupil achievement is regular and thorough. Liaison of the department with whole school life and the timely partnership with other subjects when appropriate, is well established. The Governors are active in their support and governance of religious education and ensure that the resources needed for the development of the subject are available. The religious education department works closely with diocesan advisers and is regular in its attendance at diocesan and more local meetings and training events.

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 overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing is outstanding. The leadership of the school has a vision of education that inspires and influences every aspect of the school's life. The pupils are immersed in a culture which develops their faith and involvement in the life of the church. The contribution of the chaplaincy team to liturgy, charitable initiatives, pupil support and the sense of community in Christ is noteworthy. Pupils benefit from an ethos of encouragement and cooperation to put their faith into practice. There is a shared understanding of the Common Good and older students have an articulate grasp of the church's social teaching. Pupils are involved in daily prayer and in preparing for classroom and year group Masses. The importance of the local church, the parishes in the deanery and the Archbishop are exemplified in life of the school. The Governors, both in their meetings and in the Catholic life subcommittee, give both guidance and support to underpin the Catholic life of the school.

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 2 days in school, visited 19 lessons and 6 assemblies, and carried out 6 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 Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School, Greenford 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

Dcn Anthony Clark
Mrs Niamh Brady
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Lead Inspector
Associate Inspector
Associate Inspector

Description of School

The school is a twelve form entry in the LA of Ealing and the locality of Greenford. The school serves the parish of Our Lady of the Visitation Parish in Greenford and many adjacent parishes in West London. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 93%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 2.9% and from other Faiths 3.5%. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 42%.

There are 1867 pupils on roll, with 45 pupils with statements of Special Educational Need. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well above average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average. There is below average rate of families claiming free school meals. 399 pupils receive the Pupil Premium.

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DFE Number: 3074603
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Headteacher: Mr Michael Kiely
Chair of Governors: Mrs Maggie Pound

Date of previous inspection: March 2009

Key for inspection grades:

<i>Grade 1*</i>	<i>Outstanding</i>
<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Very Good</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 said the school should strengthen the good practice in assessment through greater consistency in the monitoring of marking, to ensure that all groups of learners receive precise advice on how to improve their work and enable them to work independently. The religious education teaching and assessment for learning has improved to meet the needs of pupils to know how to improve their work enabling them to work independently. The evidence of the learning walks undertaken by senior staff provide evidence of this improvement.

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

Grade 1*

The school's management of ensuring the content of classroom religious education meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory is outstanding. From the broad programmes of study down to individual lesson plans the mapping of the Curriculum Directory to the content is evident. The KS3 religious education programme is created by the RE team and the KS4 programmes are based on the GCSE Examination units. The pupils, in the course of the programmes, learn about the beliefs and practices of Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. At 6th Form, for general religious education, the school is reviewing and updating its programmes in conjunction with the diocese. Students study different faith responses to thematic concerns like love, forgiveness and peace. They show in their approach to current social and political questions the development in their religious literacy that has been achieved in their previous years' religious education, illustrating their knowledge of scripture, church teaching and social ethics. Those pupils choosing A Level religious studies follow the OCR syllabus in Philosophy and Ethics.

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

Grade 1*

Pupils join the school with knowledge and skills that are generally above average. The Religious Education department skilfully promotes their progress so that their achievement is outstanding. Students typically achieve highly in religious education at each Key Stage, and their attainment compares very favourably with their performance in other core subjects across all Key Stages. Pupils attain well above average results at the end of Key Stage 4 that are in line with successful attainment in other core areas of the curriculum, and exceeds core subject attainment at the highest grades. Those post-16 students following Level 3 courses in Religious Studies do well in both A2 and AS examinations. The Religious Moral Development course for all post-16 students involves students in extensive service for others and continues to develop their religious literacy. Although in its infancy, it continues to evolve and develop, building on student feedback and has provided many opportunities for student leadership. At Key Stage 3, regular in-house assessments through well-structured open-ended tasks, provide ample opportunities for all pupils to flourish. 40 % of Year 9 students reach an impressive Level 6 or higher and all pupils and students in all Key Stages are very aware of their target grades and how to reach them, in addition to their progress throughout the year. Baseline assessment tasks at Key Stage 3, carefully linked to and tracked against diocesan attainment targets, demonstrate outstanding progress over time. Work is carefully moderated and the school takes seriously its target setting and tracking of religious education, and monitors the progress of all pupils rigorously.

The quality of teaching

Grade I*

Team teaching, mutual support and robust monitoring and evaluation all contribute to sustaining teaching that is consistently outstanding. High expectations, challenging tasks, including those for the most able, encourage pupils and students to reflect independently on their faith and to think critically. All teachers have a deep knowledge of the Catholic faith and teach with enthusiasm and confidence. Their informed understanding of how to challenge pupils and students to do as well as they possibly can in religious education lessons drives learning forward at every level. They have high expectations of pupils in terms of academic work, their personal development and behaviour. Inspectors' observations supported the department's own evaluation that teachers plan exceptionally well to use a wide range of resources which capture enthusiasm and interest in the Church's teaching, ethics, liturgy and traditions. As a result, most pupils make very good progress and achieve well. Lessons are hallmarked by a very high quality of relationships in a very supportive, calm, encouraging environment. In the best of lessons, teaching is characterised by a wide range of stimulating activities, with tasks well matched to individual abilities and punctuated by opportunities to reflect on learning. The department makes excellent use of the ICT resources available. A desire to serve and support pupils is underpinned by the School's motto 'All for Christ'. Work is well marked and pupils receive feedback, both written and oral from peers and from teachers, constructively identifying clear targets for improvement. Pupils, too, usually respond actively to teachers' marking, and deepen opportunities to advance their skills and knowledge. The striving for excellence is a characteristic of the department's work; there is no complacency with a relentless focus on improving learning outcomes for every student.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade I*

The leadership and management of religious education are outstanding and effective in achieving the excellent outcomes for the pupils' religious literacy. The leadership of the headteacher and senior management is productive in ensuring that religious education receives the support and opportunity to develop. The particular whole school on-line system for all subjects, a virtual learning environment (VLE) called FROG, is especially successful for religious education. Each pupil and their parents have a specific login to FROG where all the subjects and school information specific to them is available. Each teacher puts up the particular programmes of study for religious education for their pupils, together with homework assignments, further resources and classroom notices. This promotes efficient and focussed learning, good partnership with parents and constructive communication. The head of the RE department is outstanding in her leadership of, and creative thinking for, the department. The team is characterised by high expectations, attention to the particular needs of each pupil and openness to new ways to expand the horizon of pupil achievement. Through FROG and through their departmental meetings, the team share very openly and effectively resources and lesson plans.

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

- Develop and expand religious education resources on FROG, especially exercises which aid pupils to study independently and be more confident about raising the specific levels of attainment they are working to.
- Complete the review of 6th Form general RE, ensuring students are encouraged to become informed and resourceful thinkers and achieving a maturity in their religious literacy.

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 last inspection made no recommendations with respect to the Catholic life of the school. The school has however made significant developments in promoting the pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing: the annual retreat programme for both pupils and staff has been enriched; the staff of the school Chaplaincy team has been doubled; the governors have established an effective subcommittee responsible for the Catholic Life of the school; a Gospel choir has been set up; and improved relationships with the local primary school and parish have been made.

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

Grade I*

The school has had a rebuild of all of its buildings and a major new front of site block has been erected in the five years since the last inspection. The place of religious education has been well established in the very structure of the school in that the first, second and third floors of the new building house the classrooms of the core subjects, Religious Education, English, and Maths and Science respectively. Further, the buildings have all been renamed after the important places in the life of Our Lord, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem etc. The school chapel has been refurbished, with the chaplains' offices and resources adjacent, allowing pupils access to a place of prayer and quiet, as well as help and advice if sought. The school has invested in new art and artefacts for the school, only a small part of which were in place by the time of the inspection. The department is fully staffed with specialist teachers, and money has been found for the gospel choir and the school chaplaincy team of two. The substantial investment in IT resources which give increased profile to the place of religious education and Catholic life in the life of the school is significant. The budget of the RE department is generous and the new classrooms are well equipped. The curriculum time of 10% for religious education at KS 3 and 4 as well as 5% for 6th form general religious education are in line with the Conference of Bishops' requirements in the Curriculum Directory.

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

Grade I*

The experience of Catholic worship in the school is outstanding. Prayer and worship have a very high profile in the school, and the neighbouring church is used for services and Masses whenever possible. Pupils and students are involved in the preparation and delivery of liturgies and Masses, including the writing of bidding prayers, singing, serving, and acting as Eucharistic Ministers, resulting in high levels of participation and engagement. In the largely student-led Easter Celebration Liturgy attended by inspectors, pupils were respectful and interested in the re-enactment of washing of the feet by staff for pupils, and in the imaginative dramatization of the Stations of the Cross. Year group Masses are held regularly, and Masses or services are held at important times in the liturgical calendar and for specific celebrations. Pupils and students are offered the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent, and to experience other traditional forms of prayer such as the Rosary. Pupils spoke very positively about their experience of assemblies. These are usually led

by staff, with pupils and students chosen to be readers of prayers. Gospel values are at the heart of these assemblies, with clear links made to the pupils' and students' lives. One pupil spoke of the Chaplain often giving them a simple 'task' at the end of assembly, such as smiling, or holding open doors. Every form group prepares and delivers an assembly every year. Prayer is a strength in the school. The prayer resources provide a good platform for form tutors to pray with their groups, with pupils and students usually leading prayer, and the opportunities provided for reflection.

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

Grade I*

In line with the school's own evaluation, Inspectors found that the schools' commitment to action for social justice is outstanding. The school's motto 'All for Christ' places service at the heart of the community. Pupils not only contribute exceptionally well to their own community but they extend this to a wider platform and also understand that their actions are rooted in Gospel values. They volunteer, for example, as peer mentors, act as prefects and leaders, and offer support for school events. All who work here share the vision that everyone is equal whatever their background and the pupils enjoy celebrating the richness and diversity of the community. The school works very hard to ensure that there is a common sense of belonging and pupils speak of their community with immense pride. Within the school, effective systems support the value placed on community and relationships by staff and students. Opportunities to serve others are valued and respected across all key stages; pupils of all abilities are encouraged to take on positions of leadership and responsibility. Within Sixth Form, students are commissioned annually as ministers of the Eucharist and take a major role in shaping the direction and commitment to their faith within the school context. They actively promote student participation in school liturgies and in witnessing their faith. Every opportunity is taken to encourage mutual respect for each other and the community. Pupils in every key stage have an appreciation of how fortunate they are and a desire to help others less fortunate. Sixth Form students demonstrated this call to action through their passionate advocacy of a local charity as part of their studies on global poverty through the Religious Moral Development course, which was most impressive. They are responsive to both local and global situations and want to put their faith into action. They show high levels of personal commitment to supporting the Common Good, for example their innovative support for HCPT and CAFOD fundraising and their immediate response in support of the victims of typhoon disaster in the Philippines through the preparation of clothes parcels.

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 has built up and received the trust of its parents who are proud of it. The ability of many parents to keep in close touch with the school and the progress of their children through FROG is noteworthy; it was through FROG that the parents completed the questionnaire relevant to the inspection. The school cooperates closely with the local parish of Our Lady of the Visitation and the parish clergy are frequent visitors to the school. During the building programme the parish has been generous and understanding towards the school and has allowed parish facilities to be used on an ad hoc basis. The school has an excellent relationship with the diocese which has been very supportive during the rebuilding, the review of the RE programmes and on governance. The school has taken forward the diocesan advice it has received. It enjoys positive links with the local deanery, which had held its recent deanery meeting in the school shortly before the inspection. It provides opportunities to local schools, both Catholic and state, for pupil visits and subject enhancement.

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

Grade I*

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The school's support for any initiative to take forward the catholicity of the school has been rock solid. The bonds of unity and vision underpinned by faith in Jesus Christ and his church have been pivotal in the school's progress in the challenges faced and changes undergone in recent years. Each subject and department in the school can show how the threads of Catholic and Gospel values weave through the curriculum they teach. All staff, and newly appointed staff especially, are regularly inducted and exposed to Catholic teaching and ideals. The headteacher provides vision, good example, and unstinting service which give all staff the direction and focus for the life of the school. He is empowering in his trusting delegation of so much of the school's life into the hands of the staff and pupils, but equally firm on maintaining the boundaries of the nature of a Catholic school. The Governors provide excellent direction and challenge to the school, keeping their hands firmly on the tiller of oversight of the Catholic life, the leadership, the accounts and the common good of the school.

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

- To further develop its understanding of its motto 'All for Christ' the school should make staff and pupils more aware of the stories particular to the school, the stories of Cardinal Wiseman, St Vincent Pallotti, and the Jesuit spirituality of Pope Francis.