



Diocese of Westminster

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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DFE Number: (207/3477)

URN Number: 100496

Headteacher: Mrs. Anne Spragg

Chair of Governors: Canon S. Wilson

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: 26 June 2012

Date of previous inspection: January 2008

Reporting Inspector: Mrs. Tina Cleugh

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 five lessons and an assembly, and carried out five interviews with school staff, subject leader, pupils, parents and the Chair of 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, examination of school documents, and attendance at religious services where possible.

The Inspection of St. Joseph's, Kensington and Chelsea, 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 inspector is 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 one form entry in the Local Authority of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the locality of Diocese of Westminster. The school serves the parish of St. Mary's Cadogan Street, Chelsea, which is in the Kensington and Chelsea Deanery. All pupils but one at St. Joseph's are baptised Catholics. There are 230 pupils on roll, with 7 pupils with statements of Special Educational Need, (3% of roll), compared to 1.4% of the national average and 2.3% of RBKC Primary Schools. There are 38 pupils with Special Educational Needs, (16% of roll), compared with 18% of national average and 14% of RBKC Primary Schools. 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, (78%), compared to 57% of RBKC schools and 55% of RBKC VA schools. 22% of the numbers on roll are native English speakers, with Portuguese, (23%) the predominant first language, followed by Spanish at 15%, Tagalog 13% and Italian 6%. There is a below average rate of families claiming free school meals, (18%), with the Borough average at 33% and national at 19%.

The school is situated in an affluent area. The school does not reflect the wealth of the immediate, prestigious neighbourhood, and is heavily weighted to low income families. 91 Pupils, (39%) come from wards of highest deprivation in RBKC, compared to 20% nationally. 48% live outside the borough, and their parents have chosen St. Joseph's, to fit in with their places of work. Pupil mobility is at 13%, with many casual admissions in-between Census dates which are not reflected in the figures. The school has recently benefited from major building developments.

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 1

There is very good evidence of how the school meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory. Links to the Curriculum Directory are in the planning. All teachers include the Agreed Understanding levels of attainment within the planning, including the challenge to the next level for the more able, listing the range of resources available and used to good effect. This has been a key priority, implemented and developed by the subject leader in religious education this year. The school follows the Here I Am scheme of work linked to the four themes in the Curriculum Directory. There is very good evidence that teaching makes the content relevant to pupils' needs, in particular with adult assistance to those pupils with additional needs. The school covers Judaism annually, including visits from members of the Jewish Board of Deputies, to lead assemblies and class discussions. The other world faith programme is covered within a three yearly cycle, (Islam/Hinduism and Sikhism). The school utilises the personal knowledge of other faiths by staff who visit classes to answer questions.

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

Grade 2

There is evidence that good progress is made, across the ability range, over time, which stretches pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school has provided evidence of progress over time, where the subject leader is using average point scores, which are tracked termly and is being embedded across the school. The school is measuring pupil progress in religious education through the revised Agreed Understanding levels of attainment. Target sheets are monitored and reviewed by class teachers to track progress, while encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their learning and progress, for example, how pupils are encouraged to respond to questions from the teacher through the whole school marking process. There is evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work that the more able pupils are encouraged to the next level. The school has identified the need to target more challenge for pupils to achieve L5 by the end of year six, and has begun this process.

The quality of teaching

Grade 2

From the observations carried out by the inspector, there is evidence that teaching is good overall. Where teaching is outstanding the pupils were fully engaged, with every opportunity provided for them to extend their learning, through challenging planned questions, enabling them to reflect on earlier learning. The outstanding experiences created for the Early Years' pupils included their opportunity to access a rich range of tactile resources and role play to explore how Jesus provided guidance on "Building Bridges" in our lives and relationships. The good subject knowledge of the teachers in those lessons graded as 'Good or Better', empowered the pupils to explore the need to examine their conscience, to reflect on the impact of actions in daily life, thus providing opportunities for the pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Where teaching was judged as satisfactory, a lack of both pace and full engagement of all of the pupils was evident. The scrutiny of the work in the books, on display, and in general discussions with the pupils, demonstrated the improved levels of knowledge and understanding emerging. The school monitors the quality of teaching and its impact on learning through its termly schedule of class observations, informal "drop-in" observations, more formal recorded outcomes and annual

Diocesan Review observations and feedback. The 'Assessment for Learning' strategies are embedded across the school including targeted focus groups in each year group in religious education. The range of strategies include, book scrutiny, moderated levelling and a cycle of planning scrutiny. The Headteacher and the subject leader in religious education, who is also the Deputy Headteacher, record the monitoring, providing clear written and oral feedback to teachers. The school has developed the use of "Good News" Bibles to improve the links with Scripture for pupils across the phases. The pupils are proud of their "Books of Wonder". These empower the pupils to ask searching, profound questions. The Clergy in the parish are working in partnership with the teachers to explore the answers to these questions with the pupils, providing opportunities for pupils to deepen their awareness, knowledge and understanding of their faith. The staff are now familiar and confident with their "Teaching and Learning Triangles", for peer observations, focussing on sharing best practice. The subject leader confirmed that plans are in place for visits to other Catholic schools to observe, share and model good practice.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education.

Grade 2

The Deputy Headteacher is the subject leader in religious education and the Catholic life of the school. He is an excellent practitioner, who proactively guides colleagues through the Diocesan changes currently being implemented for effective religious education and attainment. The strong partnership between the Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher, as subject leader, is driven by their commitment and secure knowledge and understanding of what is needed to continue to improve. The subject leader is empowering a team of members of the school community to embrace the priorities for ongoing improvement in delivering religious education. They attend a range of Diocesan in-service. They are fully up to date with the changes and revised programmes being delivered by the Diocese, which is embedded into the Continuing Professional Development, (CPD) programmes. This is woven through the School Improvement Matrix, throughout the academic year. They welcome the support and guidance from the Diocesan Advisor in developing their identified areas to continue to move the school forward. The subject leader has updated the RE Handbook, which is disseminated to staff through inset. The Governing Body is pro-actively supporting the school's identified priorities and its members are regular participants in school life.

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

There is evidence that the school has fully met the areas for improvement since the last inspection. Assessment practices are now embedded across the phases, with planning clearly linked to levels of attainment and the agreed understandings' documents. Pupil records are up to date and ready for transition hand-over, which supports consistency and progression. Marking includes opportunities for pupils to take the "next steps" in learning. The Diocesan Advisor has acknowledged this in her two most recent reports during this academic year.

The Leadership team has recognised the need to address the following areas for continued improvement:-

- Teaching plans to include opportunities for mini-plenaries to recap on the learning outcome
- Provide opportunities for teachers to observe religious education lessons in other schools as models of good practice
- Create an RE Team to share the responsibility for the role, across the phases, utilising the range of expertise including Clergy and non teaching colleagues
- Plan in-service to introduce the revised Curriculum Directory for all involved in religious education across the school.

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

Overall Grade: 2

Curriculum religious education is good overall in developing pupils' religious literacy. The Curriculum Directory forms the basis and underpins all that is provided across the phases of the school. Teachers plan for good provision for all pupils, with evidence during the inspection, including the range of 'Good or Better' teaching observed. Leadership of the subject is good, with all staff supported and empowered to continue to develop and improve.

The systems, structures, robust planning and expectations, are now in place. There is evidence that pupils across the phases are becoming religiously literate, confident and benefiting from opportunities to deepen their faith. There is evidence that systems are being consistently delivered, and the areas for improvement are identified and recognised. The whole school commitment includes the active participation of members of the Parish community, in particular members of the clergy. They are regularly providing high quality religious education, supported through the clear vision of the Headteacher and the subject leader in religious education, which informs the whole school evaluation process. This process has indicated the identified areas for on-going improvement.

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 I

The school meets the 10% requirement of the Curriculum Directory. The subject leader in religious education is also aware of the newly revised version of the Curriculum Directory, with plans to implement it through ongoing in-service for all staff in the next academic year. The "Heart of the School" newly developed area, which is light, bright and airy, provides space for displays and prayer foci, which celebrate the "centrality of faith," to all that is carried out on a daily basis. The "St. Joseph" area, including the hand-carved wooden life sized statue, creates the prayerful atmosphere on entry to this special space in the school. The collaborative partnership and links with St. Thomas More Secondary School, including the "Art Project", to create the beautiful 3-dimensional "Cross", continues termly. This demonstrates the school's commitment to its priority for religious education and in particular the Catholic life of the school, to be the 'core of the core curriculum, with Christ at the Centre'. The Governing Body has committed generously to ensure that time, funding and resources, including Continuing Professional Development for all staff, is fundamental to their ongoing development within the school's mission and ethos. There is very good evidence that the pro-active partnerships now created can continue to flourish through future developments.

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

Grade I*

The spirituality of the school community is profound, tangible and evident in the ethos and atmosphere, which prevails across all aspects of the daily life the school. The school has a fully committed schedule for prayer, which is central to the school in every form of its celebrations. This enhances the faith life of the school community, within the liturgical cycle. The recently developed DVD, entitled, "The Catholic Life of St. Joseph's," provides an outstanding introduction and portrayal of the importance and status of the Catholic Life and Worship of this school. The recently formed "Liturgy Team" assist the RE Leader in preparing Masses, services and key celebrations. The school is well served by the Chair of Governors, a Seminarian from Allen Hall and the Assistant Priest in the parish of St. Mary's. The pupils benefit from their dedicated support which fosters the Catholic life of the school community, whilst empowering the religious formation for their pupils. This includes opportunities for dance, drama and readings, which were also evident in their records, and presented with great pride, by the pupils during the inspection. The planned termly programme includes a range of excellent opportunities for pupils to participate fully, including preparing the sacred space in class rooms, the large team of altar servers, both in school and the parish, and how the school choir support Parish liturgies and Masses, The engagement of pupils and staff embracing the Catholic ethos, is enriched through shared staff prayer, lunchtime prayer groups, special services, such as those to mark Advent and Lent, as an integral part of the provision across the phases. These special liturgical events and celebrations, such as the Palm Sunday Liturgy, starting from the school and ending back in the school, for shared refreshments, is testimony to their successful and thriving Triple Partnership. The catechetical programme, run by the Parish, with many parents as Catechists, using the school facilities and resources, is yet another excellent example of the way in which the school shares its resources. The school ensures these enrichment opportunities are planned termly, enabling their pupils to develop their prayer life, including the celebration of the Eucharist and other Sacramental celebrations throughout the year, for the benefit of the whole school community.

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

The focus on contributing to the Common Good is embedded across a high range of planned activities, including opportunities for pupils to be responsible citizens within their school environment and indeed to become aware of their local, national and global responsibilities. There is evidence of the growing confidence of the pupils to respond to their “call to serve” throughout the school year.

The school generously supports a wide range of charities, including CAFOD, the Cardinal Hume Centre, St. Joseph’s Almshouses, Samaritan’s Purse, Catholic Children’s Society, raising in excess of £2,000+ during the past year. There are selections of correspondence, including “thank you” notes from a range of societies, organisations, including the Vatican Secretariat, acknowledging the “Holy Father’s thanks to the pupils on welcoming him to the UK”. The pupils are very clear about their role in ‘our communities’, demonstrating their commitment to service and social justice and how their “attitudes shape their lives” and “make us feel we want to keep people in our prayers”. The pupils were confident and articulate in outlining how they explore the work of historical leaders and the way this has impacted on improving the lives of people today. They explore the work of the “Cardinal Hume Centre” serving the homeless in London, and they also support the work of the elderly attached to the “St. Joseph’s Almshouses” community on a regular basis.

The pupils are clearly committed to their responsible roles in the school and their school as a “safe place”. “Bullying doesn’t really happen here... we are all one here, everyone is strong... when we light a candle we feel safe and know Jesus is looking after us”. It is evident from the inspection that behaviour in and around the school is exemplary. The pupils are proud of their roles as “playground supervisors” wearing their high visibility jackets and acting as “peer mediators”. Respect for others and with each other is central to their way of life within their school and parish community.

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 Governing Body, Headteacher and Senior Leaders embrace Diocesan training, guidance and support. The subject leader in religious education, has forged links within the Deanery RE cluster, in particular, supporting others with the Diocesan changes to the Agreed Understanding and attainment in religious education. This is developing throughout this academic year. Pupils attend Diocesan services during Advent, Lent, (in particular their pride in supporting the choir seated in the Sanctuary of the Cathedral), and also participate in their Parish services, as altar servers and the choir. The school has forged strong links with St. Thomas More Secondary school, sharing Masses, such as Palm Sunday and Corpus Christi, with pupils designing and creating the powerful “Cross” situated in the “Heart of the School. The Priests from the Parish are regular and supportive visitors to the school, as testified during the meeting between the Chair of Governors and the Inspector. The inclusiveness of the school community is celebrated annually through the Carol Service, Summer Concert, St. Joseph’s Day and the Leavers’ Mass. These special events are attended by governors, parents and local parishioners. The school opens its doors for use by local parishioners, for catechesis, Parish Open meetings, using their new “Heart of the School” area for parental gatherings, prayer meetings, volunteer work. The school is proud of its Catholic ethos, its sense of belonging to the Diocesan Community of schools.

Parents are most supportive of the school and appreciate its role in their triple partnership. The group of parents met during the inspection referred proudly about how the school, “encourages our children to write their own prayers...I am learning more about my faith now through my child and the school...I look forward to bringing my child to school... with the ‘heart of the school’, we feel we belong to a real community”. The parental questionnaire had 44 responses, (19% of the school roll), with 93% agreeing or strongly supporting the school’s provision.

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

Grade I

The strong commitment and vision of the senior leaders and middle managers in promoting the catholic life and ethos across all levels of the school is very good indeed.

The Chair of Governors, with the Governing Body, is fully committed to supporting the Catholic ethos and life of the school. The weekly visit by the Chair, the link Governor, meeting with the subject leader in religious education, supports the review of the religious education and Catholic Life of the school policy and procedures. This commitment with the Senior Leadership Team is borne out where they share their strong vision to promote the Catholic life of the school.

The layers of leadership across the school fully embrace and provide active commitment to ensuring all staff, parents and pupils can fully participate in the religious life of the school, whilst living out its mission statement. They actively engage in enhancing the school as a community of faith, sharing a high regard for the holistic development of the catholic life and faith of their school community.

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

The Headteacher and Governing Body have through their appointment of a Catholic Deputy Headteacher, who leads on the religious education and Catholic life of the school, helped to strengthen the links with the parish of St. Mary's and the Chaplain at St. Thomas More Secondary School. This has also been enhanced by cross-curricular links and specialism, including Modern Foreign Languages, ICT, Sports, Art, Music and other subject links.

The clergy are visible weekly in school, supporting teachers with confidence to develop their knowledge and understanding related to liturgy planning. The school has reviewed its core values, now represented as "Respectful, Responsible, Resourceful" complemented by the "Let the little Children come to me" translated into the main languages of the school, and visible in key public areas around the school building.

The school is also proud of its accommodation development with the "Heart of the School" facilities, which are well used by all involved in the 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

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School provides very good provision in developing the Catholic way of living for all in their community. There is evidence of how religious education is valued across the curriculum, meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory, including appropriate staffing, resources and the newly developed school accommodation. Great emphasis has been placed on the place of prayer and worship throughout the school year, and within the liturgical cycle. Pupils and staff are actively engaged in the planning and their participation in the high range of school and parish based liturgies and celebrations. The links and partnerships with the parish, the local community and the Diocese are effectively supporting the ongoing developments of the school. The leadership and management of the Catholic way of living and believing, is well established, This is underpinned by their self-evaluation processes, which are shared across the school community enhancing religious education and the Catholic Life of this school.