



Diocese of Westminster

St. Edmund's Catholic Primary School

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DFE Number: 318/3315

URN Number: 102912

Headteacher: Mrs C. Moreland
Chair of Governors: Mrs. D. Long

**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: 11 October, 2012
Date of previous inspection: 28 November, 2006

Reporting Inspector: Mrs. T. 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 all lessons and an assembly, and carried out four sets of 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, examination of school documents, and attendance at religious services.

The Inspection of St. Edmund's, Whitton, 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 two form entry in the LA of Richmond-Upon-Thames and the locality of Whitton. The school serves the parish of St. Edmund's, Whitton. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 96.6% The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 1.2% and from other Faiths 2.2.%.

There are 413 pupils on roll, with 6% (8) pupils with statements of Special Educational Need. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is above average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is below average. There is a well below, rate of families claiming free school meals.

The school has admitted Nursery aged pupils, (52), for the first time since September 2012

Key for inspection grades.

Grade 1: Outstanding;*

Grade 1: Very Good;

Grade 2: Good;

Grade 3: Requires improvement;

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 2

The school is linking the topic on Creation devised by the Upper Thames Deanery (UTD) to the revised Curriculum Directory, in line with its partner deanery schools. The school has also incorporated the Diocesan composite materials including those guiding schools through the “Year of Faith” and the materials from CAFOD. The planning for this is integral to the delivery of the religious education curriculum, in particular its links within the four areas of study in the Curriculum Directory, across the phases. The school has recognised in its self-evaluation, the need to further develop its understanding of the Curriculum Directory for pupils, staff, and school leaders to enable pupils to develop their understanding especially at key stage two.

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

Grade 2

The evidence from the inspection demonstrates how the school has developed good electronic systems for recording and tracking attainment in religious education, in particular individual record sheets per pupil, which reflect the current level of attainment, following moderation. These levels of attainment are used by teachers and the leader of religious education to moderate standards, which are also shared with Deanery colleagues. This is complemented by “learning walks” including class observations to track the pupils’ responses and identify levels of progress across the school. The systematic tracking of levels of attainment and progress in religious education is evident in the status given to religious education in the School Improvement Plan for 2012-2013. The school has identified the need to continue to moderate levels of attainment in line with the revised agreed understandings. This is part of the school’s commitment to raising standards even further to the higher levels at the end of key stage one and key stage two. The school has introduced the use of scripture, linked to the development of the traditions and rituals of our faith. This is being further developed within the planning and in particular, to meet the needs of all ability levels.

The quality of teaching

Grade 2

The quality of teaching is good overall. There was evidence of outstanding teaching in the early years, where the pupils were encouraged to explore the reason for celebrating the harvest. This has also been extended to include: the importance of our stewardship of creation to share with one another, demonstrated by use of the puppets; baking “play dough biscuits” to share; the exploration of the St. Therese’s “Little Way”, celebrated through pupils’ efforts to “love one another”, with their “deeds” decorated on their “Little Deed Tree”.

The key stage one pupils reflected the message from scripture re-enacting the story of the Five Loaves and Two Fishes, whereby the pupils were connecting the links between scripture and their harvest celebration, as well as their preparation of the “rucksacks” for Mary’s Meals. The theme of the “Year of Faith” in opening our doors to be sharing and caring in our daily lives, linked to how, “Jesus has unlocked the doors of our hearts”, from our Baptism. These young pupils are being supported and guided to reflect carefully on the purpose of their actions, and the call to find ways to be compassionate and sharing with each other in school, locally and globally. In the younger juniors,

the pupils explored the use of litanies to express their appreciation for Creation, and following Jesus' call to "love one another and love our neighbours". Pupils were also introduced to using passages from Scripture, (Matthew's Gospel), to understand how they are becoming, "as Christ wants us to be", by helping others, as everyone is our neighbour. This work was also linked to the work of CAFOD. The older juniors explored the work of CAFOD, through their "games and puzzles", to explore ways they can become CAFOD's helpers in the context of our call to service and justice in our world. Pupils were exploring ways to be actively involved and linked this to scripture from Matthew's Gospel and to other biblical references.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade I

The religious education leader, with the support and guidance from the Headteacher and the senior leadership team, provides very good leadership and management of religious education across the school. There is clear and enthusiastic vision and commitment to the educational mission of the children. The religious education action plan and the school improvement plan provide evidence of the shared structures, systems and direction between all involved in promoting the leadership and management of religious education. The Mission Statement is integral to all aspects and the Governing Body are clear in their understanding of their role to hold the school accountable. The investment in quality resources to support effective delivery of religious education, matches that for other core subject areas. There is evidence of a high number of staff either holding the CCRS (or equivalent) or working through its modules, with one member of staff being supported through the MA in Catholic Leadership. Within an annual cycle, the school plans explicit religious based training with the local Catholic primary schools. The CPD cycle includes priority given to developing the knowledge, skills and understanding for staff, including the pro-active and supportive role of the Parish Priest. The performance management target for staff includes embedding familiarity and confidence in the planning and delivering the themes of the Curriculum Directory. The subject leader of religious education, who is also a member of the senior leadership team, is fully aware of the issues to be developed to ensure improvement in both teaching and its impact upon achievement overall across the school.

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

The school has fully met the action points from the previous inspection. The religious education leader is now confident to lead and guide effective delivery of religious education. She is moderating standards, in liaison with members of the Upper Thames Deanery schools and Diocesan Advisors. She has scheduled management time to carry out effective monitoring and tracking of progress and delivery of religious education. The school has developed its links with Deanery schools to support the planning of units of work to coincide with the themes of the Curriculum Directory and to moderate levels of attainment. These are built into the school's tracking system, which is shared with staff to empower them to evaluate progress. The school has devised different strategies for peer self-assessment and, in the light of recent revisions, is further revising this process. The religious education governor is pro-active in supporting and guiding staff, informing Governors and keeping up to date with revised developments for effective religious education. The school has identified its need to further develop the curriculum in line with the requirements of the revised Curriculum Directory, whilst also supporting the strategies to enable pupils to achieve Level Five at the end of key stage two.

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

Overall Grade: 2

The school has identified its priorities for ongoing improvement and development of the religious education programme to empower pupils to develop their religious literacy by the end of key stage two. They have introduced systems for planning, including the appropriate use of scripture within the themes being explored. They have liaised with their Upper Thames Deanery colleagues to ensure moderation is integral to their assessment and tracking systems. There is evidence that some pupils, by the end of key stage two, are accessing level five through their areas of study, which the school is now incorporating into their termly plans. These cross deanery units are planned to ensure progression and continuity in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. There was evidence during the inspection of how some older junior pupils were exploring the work of CAFOD, relating it to their everyday experiences and how the pupils can act responsibly to support our global neighbours, and learn to think ethically and theologically. The school has generously invested in a range of resources, including ICT programmes to help create the sense of wonder and awe in their reflections, within the themes being explored. The school has identified its need to empower pupils to self-assess their work, and works to meet the needs of all abilities as an on-going priority within the current school improvement plan.

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 requirement to deliver 10% of curriculum time for religious education. Religious education is given high priority and focus across all aspects of the school. There is evidence of cross curricular opportunities to further develop pupils' understanding of religious themes and links to other areas of the curriculum. The school has empowered colleagues to further their CPD, supporting a member of staff studying for the MA in Catholic Leadership. The CPD programme is generously balanced to ensure effective religious education training is available across the range of needs. The annual investment in religious education and the Catholic Life of the School is generous with high quality resources available. The opportunity for the development of the prayer life of the staff is incorporated into the annual CPD programme. This is further supported through the close proximity of the Church and the school supporting the high range of parish events and celebrations. The work on CAFOD across many year groups provides the evidence of progression and continuity for the pupils to grow in their levels of knowledge and understanding. The clear links within the curriculum, planned by teachers from nursery to year six, ensures these pupils re-visit their role as members of the Church in our world. This enhances their responsibility to continue as "stewards" of creation, whilst respecting and responding to the needs of those on the margins locally, nationally and globally.

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

Grade I*

The centrality of prayer and liturgy is evident in the planned celebrations throughout the liturgical cycle of the school year. The presence of the Parish Priest in supporting many aspects of the school is worthy of note. The events for worship and reflection, which are varied across the liturgical cycle, involved pupils in the planning and delivery, while offering valuable opportunities for parents and parishioners to participate and benefit from these events. There is evidence that the pupils are well prepared for the revisions to the Roman Missal and that the revised Mass settings and other liturgies are well established across the school. There is clear evidence that the Eucharist is central to school worship and the pupils are confident in their responses and participate fully. The school has a high number of staff trained as Eucharistic Ministers, supporting their range of Eucharistic celebrations. The Parish Priest is proud that over one hundred altar servers come initially and continually from the school. Through discussion with parents during the inspection, there is overwhelming evidence of how much the sacramental life of the school, including how it impacts on pupils' lives, is valued in pupils' confident responses in Mass and other liturgies. Prayer books created by pupils across the school from nursery to year six, reflect their growing relationship with God and their appreciation of belonging to God's family. Opportunities for personal, corporate prayer and reflection are integral to the real sense of wonder, reverence and awe. This was witnessed during the inspection in several classes reflecting on creation, the harvest and how we can bear witness to others in our response to God's call. The outstanding assembly, to mark the beginning of the Year of Faith, led by younger junior pupils in the presence of parents, governors and the Parish Priest, is a prime example of this school's commitment to the centrality of prayer and worship in the lives of these pupils and all in the community.

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

There is very strong evidence of an exceptional range of opportunities for staff, parents and pupils to understand their role in living out the Gospel call to service and justice.

Behaviour and self-respect is exemplary, where pupils demonstrate care and responsibility for others and their community, locally, nationally and globally. They are proud of the range of responsible roles they carry out and how for some, in this role of responsibility, they are “the voice of the pupils”. The pupils across the phases explored the work of CAFOD, in particular the links to developing their knowledge and understanding of their role in society, their global responsibilities and how they can respond to the call to the service of the Lord. There was detailed and informative evidence of the annual trends of the school’s commitment to the Common Good locally, nationally and globally. There is a high range of Catholic charities supported by pupils, including CAFOD, Catholic Children’s Society, Good Shepherd Funds and Mary’s Meals. Their generosity is further exemplified through the “harvest baskets” distributed around the local community, their “share the harvest” meal during Family Fast Day with the Parishioners and cakes shared with the school and local elderly. The pupils who met with the inspector endorsed their pride in their active role in the school.

Pupils’ commitment to ecumenism is demonstrated through their fundraising and support to Christian charities such as Action Aid, the Shooting Star Hospice appeal, and the Remembrance appeals held at Kneller Hall. The pupils also demonstrate their skills and talents, supporting the local community, including Age Concern, Age UK and Christmas carol singing locally in the community. There was evidence during the inspection from all pupils in the early years, infants and juniors, about how well they understand the theology which underpins their actions, at age appropriate levels. An excellent example of this was how the early years demonstrated their commitment through their “Good Deed Tree”, following in the example of St. Therese of Lisieux’s, through the “Little Way Week”. The older pupils researched the CAFOD programmes and selected their actions (including praying for those on the margins, setting up fundraising and awareness) which would be linked to the variety of activities being planned. They also explored the relevant scripture passages, which opened up for them the principles underpinning the Church’s teaching on social justice. Links with global communities and how the school has sponsored a child in Senegal, has been reflected in their achievement of the International Award from the British Council, celebrating their commitment.

**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***

Since the previous inspection, there is clear evidence of the way the school commits to diocesan initiatives, conferences and liturgical celebrations. This includes the shared purpose and vision of the Governing Body, working in close collaboration with the parents, the staff and the parishioners. The growing partnership with the Deanery and Southwark Diocesan schools, as well as colleagues within the Diocese of Westminster, has impacted on their shared purpose. Parents respect and value the contribution of the school to the faith development of their children. This is borne out through the very high number of responses to the questionnaires, 54% agreeing and 38% strongly agreeing with the school’s overall provision (92%). They are extremely proud of their school and its commitment to nurturing the faith and spiritual development of their children. The parental group meeting the inspector included a grandparent and long serving supporter of the school, and a retired colleague who continues to offer voluntary service to the pupils. Their pride and dedication can be encapsulated by the comment from one of the panel, “everyone in our community here loves and cares for one another because of the nurturing they get here”. Their Chair of Governors remarked that “our children are confident and comfortable with faith in their lives, which is at the centre of everything we do here”. The long serving Governor explained the range of high level expertise and experience within the Governing Body, providing challenge and rigour to the agenda for ongoing

improvement and development. The Parish Priest remarked how “our Church would be a desert without the school” and how the impact of the excellent and vibrant relationship between the school, home and parish reveals how the school inspires and influences the lives of all connected to the community.

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

Grade I*

The Headteacher with her confident leadership team now in place, including the religious education leader, sets the strategic vision, which is central to the school’s determination for on-going development. She is ably supported and challenged by the Governing Body, who are well informed and actively engaged in providing clear direction and robust accountability, as external demands change and grow. The mission and vision of the school is promoted and evaluated effectively to identify the priorities for ongoing improvement and development. This is reflected in the range of CPD planned within the Performance Management cycle and appropriately linked to the relevant school improvement agenda.

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

The school has sustained and maintained its high quality commitment to the Catholic Life, mission and vision 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 leadership of the school is its driving force, embedding Christian principles which are woven through all aspects of the school improvement and development process. The extremely effective relationships and partnerships within the school are key to its success. The centrality of worship and prayer empowers pupils and staff to experience the richness of our faith and traditions, which are celebrated throughout the liturgical cycle. The active engagement with, and opportunities, for parents and parishioners is a hallmark of the way the school lives out its mission and ethos, and which is embraced by all concerned in the daily life of the school.