

Westminster Diocese Inspection Report

St Eugene de Mazenod Catholic Primary School

Mazenod Avenue, Quex Road, NW6 4LS

Date of inspection: 20 May 2016



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 is outstanding. The rich, creative curriculum is clearly linked to the Curriculum Directory. It significantly contributes to the rapid and sustained progress across the phases. Pupils demonstrate a real thirst for learning. They are encouraged to think and reason, showing a depth of religious literacy, which is underpinning the theology within the varied topics being explored. Overall, the typicality of teaching is outstanding with religious education delivered through extremely well planned activities and the highest aspirations for pupils. The governing body, in partnership with the senior leadership team, works tirelessly through its clear vision and purpose striving for excellence. The subject leader in religious education, through her wide experience, understanding, commitment and excellent subject knowledge, ensures that the centrality of religious education is paramount. She inspires her teaching team which ensures that highly effective structures are being embedded across the phases. The active networks within the deanery, the diocese and their three partnership schools have ensured that excellent models of good practice are shared resulting in outstanding provision in religious education.

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 vibrant and dynamic experience for Catholic life offered to pupils and staff is outstanding. The excellent community partnership, which is highly innovative, inspires the pupils and staff to 'human flourishing.' The self-evaluation is accurate, coherent and reflects the rigorous monitoring, analysis and challenge which are carried out regularly. The leadership from the head of school, together with the executive headteacher and the governing body, is the driving force which brings pupils to fullness of life; there is a clear vision of discipleship. The excellent systems being embedded for induction of staff, with succession planning opportunities, empower all staff to contribute effectively to the Catholic life of the school. Pupils are able and confident to explain the importance of equality and justice, which is highly influenced by their patron, St. Eugene de Mazenod. Pupils are proud of their school, explain their logo and its impact on their daily prayer, worship and, in particular, how they live out the Gospel values on a daily basis. These excellent attitudes define the community and its commitment to the Common Good and social justice.

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 7 lessons and an assembly and three collective worship, 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 St. Eugene de Mazenod, West Hampstead, 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

Mrs Tina Cleugh	Lead Inspector
Mrs Ann Staunton	Associate Inspector
Mrs Sharon O'Donovan	Associate Inspector

Description of School

This Voluntary Aided, school is a one form entry in the LA of Camden and the locality of West Hampstead and Kilburn. The school serves the parish of Sacred Heart, Kilburn. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 99%. There are no pupils who are from other Christian denominations and 1% from other Faiths. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 50%.

There are 210 pupils on roll, with 4 pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health & Care Plans (EHCP). 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 a well above average rate of families claiming free school meals. One hundred and five pupils receive the Pupil Premium.

Telephone:	020 7624 4837
e-mail address:	admin@steugene.camden.sch.uk

DFE Number:	202 3649
URN Number:	100047

Executive Headteacher:	Mrs Juliette Jackson
Associate Head of School	Ms Rebecca Smith
Chair of Governors:	Mr. Guy Shackle

Date of previous inspection:	November 2011
Previous Inspection grades:	I

Key for inspection grades:	<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Outstanding</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?

Termly monitoring of progress and planning is now embedded across the school. It forms the termly cycle of monitoring and evaluation, as for other core subjects. This ensures consistency of challenge which contributes to the very high quality religious education and overall provision across the phases. This is incorporated into the performance management cycle for all staff. Teachers new to Catholic education are effectively supported by the leader for religious education, through a range of modelling, including support in planning through regular 'planning surgeries.' The paired planning for religious education enables continuity and progression for teachers within the year groups and across the phases. The development of the assessment and tracking process includes the 'I can' statements. These are well matched to the agreed understandings and moderated exemplification samples. The school has focussed on developing independent research skills in religious education for the pupils to attain at the higher levels of attainment and to be challenged to achieve effectively from their starting points.

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

Grade 1

The school fully meets the 10% requirement of the Bishops' Conference and in particular there is a good match of topics within the scheme used by the school to the Curriculum Directory. The leader for religious education monitors the planning robustly to ensure effective links also to the liturgical cycle. This is particularly evident in the creative opportunities for pupils across the phases to benefit from a rich range of learning opportunities, including links with ICT, art and drama. The school also organises visits to Westminster Cathedral and visits to other places of worship for other faiths. The school recruits from St. Mary's University in Twickenham, where possible. They benefit from the high level of experienced Catholic staff which ensures their induction programmes for new and inexperienced Catholic teachers is effective, particularly in their delivery of religious education. Their programmes of support for their pupils identified with SEND, is effectively empowering these pupils to make excellent progress in religious education, from their starting points. The role of the 'other adults' in the learning process is given a high status and is very well tracked. This ensures that religious education is given the same status and priority as for other core subjects.

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

Grade 1

The school has implemented a range of strategies to ensure that pupils achieve effectively in religious education. They use the agreed understandings in religious education to measure progress and attainment, through moderation in partnership with the diocese and local diocesan networks. This is particularly evident in the precise and detailed planning of areas being taught. This includes carefully planned probing questioning, which impacts on progress for all pupils and in particular provides challenge for the more able. Their exemplification of moderated samples, scrutinised by the inspectors, verifies the teacher's high expectations for pupils to attain, including independent research opportunities, which deepens their thinking and underpins their understanding of the

theology and philosophy in the areas being covered. There is evidence from the scrutiny of the work in the books and through discussions with pupils, that they make rapid and sustained progress from their starting points in religious education. The very high expectation from teachers and those other adults in the learning process inspires pupils to excel and extend their learning. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and demonstrate exceptional religious literacy. They enjoy the range of 'whole school project weeks' which brings their learning in religious education into context, such as 'Peace Week', 'Catholic Social Justice Week' and 'Stories Jesus Told' weeks. The scrutiny of the work in books, including pictorial portfolios, demonstrates the way pupils are applying their learning and understanding into a range of different contexts, still at a very high and at times mature level. The determination of the head of school, as the leader for religious education, to deal swiftly and robustly with any issues arising, including insistence on consistency and adherence to agreed strategies and policies, sustains this highly effective and outstanding provision.

The quality of teaching

Grade 1

The range of outstanding teaching observed across the phases demonstrates the way in which teachers enable and empower pupils to continually extend their learning, knowledge and understanding of theology. The excellent subject knowledge of the leader of religious education, who plans a rich range of continuing professional development and modelling from experienced colleagues, ensures that consistent and sustainable progress is evident across the school. Displays in the classroom and in the public areas of the school show the rich and creative approaches to teaching and learning in religious education. They include reference to 'talk partners' to reinforce earlier learning and share ideas. These opportunities include development of ideas linked to the 'Christian values' displayed in classrooms, which embody the rich language opportunities for all pupils to develop their religious literacy across the phases, at age appropriate levels. The development of well-planned and targeted questioning is also evident during group tasks, where pupils work collaboratively, including imparting knowledge with confidence. The high expectations from the teacher as the task is outlined, supports the pupils to think critically and to deepen their levels of knowledge and understanding. The structures and systems embedded by the leadership team ensure that the quality of children's learning experiences is outstanding. Planning is very thorough and includes many opportunities for creative activities which allow pupils to explore and apply their learning within their everyday lives and contexts. The '2-Connect' electronic system, for acknowledging responses from pupils, is highly effective in acknowledging their oral input. This also indicates their growing levels of knowledge and understanding in the theology underpinning the areas being explored. Scripture is used in all year groups, with effective links to ICT and appropriate video clips, such as the story of the prodigal son and how it impacts on the importance of forgiveness, in this Year of Mercy, with the challenge to pupils to relate this to their everyday lives.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade 1

The leader for religious education has a dynamic and outstanding vision for the pupils to consistently strive for excellence. The exceptional progress made by all pupils from their starting points across the phases, is testimony to the highly effective structures and systems implemented by the leader, together with her team of middle and senior leaders. The partnership of the school, across the three other schools, through their 'religious education projects team,' enables a shared focus with models of excellence shared across the three schools. The head of school outlined her relentless focus on high aspirations for excellence, which include her wide range of planned continuing professional development opportunities. This is especially evident in the modelling of good practice for staff new to Catholic education and those inexperienced Catholic teachers. Her regular and accurate evaluations inform the areas for development. The rigour applied to the termly monitoring process results in the current strengths with well-established systems and procedures. The strong and highly

effective understanding and appreciation by the leader of religious education and her team, on the centrality of the place of religious education in the mission of the church, is outstanding. This is also well supported by the RE link governor, who is a frequent and active visitor to the school, keeping abreast of the rates of progress and provision in religious education, for pupils across the phases.

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

- Continue to extend and consolidate pupil learning in religious education through following up their 'mission action' task from class worship which is to be developed at home, reflecting the practice of their daily lives.

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?

Pupils are engaged in planning and delivering a range of class worship and prayer from Year 2 to Year 6. The pupils are confident and articulate in planning their class prayer services, writing their own personal and reflective prayers. They have many opportunities to deepen their personal and shared relationship with God, as evident in their prayer books observed during the inspection. They were happy and proud to share their experiences in planning worship for their classes and in some cases sharing their model of good practice with other diocesan schools. The 'daily meditations' are now embedded as part of the daily prayer cycle, which encourages stillness. The pupil 'prayer books' which follow the pupils through the school, provide evidence of the range and quality of their personal reflections and their growing relationship with God.

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

Grade 1

The school fully meets the 10% requirement for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The governing body generously allocates annual funding to religious education and the Catholic life of the school as for other core subjects. They ensure that effective continuing professional development opportunities are provided for new and inexperienced staff and in particular ongoing opportunities for middle and senior leaders. The mission statement of 'Go shine in the world' is encapsulated in the day to day life of the school and its ongoing commitment to liturgy, prayer, worship, the Common Good and social justice. Pupils are confident in outlining how their mission statement is lived out through their commitment to helping others in need and responding to the call of Pope Francis, during this Year of Mercy. The very high status given to religious education and the Catholic life of the school is borne out in the regular and accurate evaluations of the school 'Work Plan.' This is presented termly to the governing body and to the governor with a special interest in religious education and the Catholic life of the school. The governors, through regular visits and learning walks, with focus on three pupils in different year groups termly, provide a clear and succinct level of evidence for the impact on the priorities identified; this is presented termly in the meeting. Governors are regularly welcomed to school assemblies, celebrations and events. The governing body has plans to develop a 'prayer garden' for further extension of prayer opportunities in the natural environment. The colourful, attractive and extremely high quality displays, both interior and exterior, accompanied by a rich range of resources, are driven by very high expectations in the excellent learning culture of the school. The resourcing includes opportunities for covering both the Christian and other world faith studies, with planned visits to places of worship, invitations to representatives to lead workshops, all of which bring the learning alive for the pupils.

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

Grade

The experience of Catholic worship prayer and liturgy is outstanding. The dedication to daily and weekly prayer and worship and its commitment to living out the Gospel values, defines the community. The school's close proximity to the parish Church of the Sacred Heart, provides

excellent opportunities for all members of the community to enrich the partnership of home, school and parish. The prayer life and worship opportunities are fully endorsed and supported with access to the church, as both the parish priest and the school chaplain are actively engaged in the termly schedule of liturgical and special celebrations. Engaging and innovative prayer experiences are central to the life of St. Eugene's. Pupils are offered a wealth of opportunities to reflect on their growing relationship with God. The 'prayer tree' centrally placed in the school allows the children to write their own individual and spontaneous prayers, some of which are incorporated into the whole school assemblies. This enables a further and deeper sense of their community praying together and for one another. Prayer is embedded into the daily life of the school. Pupils from Year 1 upwards lead prayer and the pupils also have excellent and daily opportunities for reflection and stillness. Pupils' spiritual development is nurtured and developed through reflection, discussion and sharing ideas. 'Talk Topics' reflect a wider experience of wonder and awe. There are a variety of prayer opportunities offered as a result of the work on 'Catholic Social Justice' principles. An excellent example of this is where some Year 5 pupils were reflecting on the 'dignity and rights of workers'. Pupils are currently reflecting on the work of the Holy Spirit and Pentecost, in relation to the gifts of the Holy Spirit and how pupils are inspired in their lives today to follow the example of Jesus. They are challenged to reflect on how they can be 'witnesses to the Holy Spirit' in their everyday lives. There is a great sense of cohesion and value for every individual and particularly for 'loving their neighbour' around the world, especially for vulnerable communities, locally and around the world. During worship and assemblies pupils listen attentively, reverently and thoughtfully. They are respectful and listen to the ideas of others.

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

Grade 1

The excellent commitment and contribution to the Common Good and social justice is the hallmark of how this school prepares its pupils for living out their mission statement of, 'Go shine your light in the world.' The warmth of the pupils with each other and their excellent relationships with the staff, exemplify the outstanding culture in the school. Behaviour is exemplary across the school both in class and through the public areas. Pupils demonstrate responsible and mature attitudes, including in their learning. There is an awareness of the plight of those less well off than themselves and in particular the importance of agencies, such as CAFOD and St. Vincent de Paul Society, and their own parish support for the homeless including the foodbank for vulnerable members of their local community. The generosity of the pupils and their families is evident in the range of fundraising and its regular cycle of activities. The regular non-uniform days supports these commitments to living out their mission. They described with pride about their own school 'Door of Mercy', blessed by their chaplain. They also described the importance of their school logo, and the story behind it, linked clearly to their sense of community, understanding and appreciation of their mantra to 'Go shine in the world' through service to others and the 'way of being committed to social justice,' like St. Vincent De Paul. Pupils feel safe in school. They feel their voice is heard by adults through their school council and they are confident to approach their teachers as 'trusted adults' for any worries or concerns. The school council does make a difference, such as the 'mirrors in the toilets to keep them tidy.' They enjoy their rich range of educational visits such as to the Houses of Parliament, St. Paul's and Westminster Cathedral.

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 demonstrates an outstanding partnership with parents, parish and diocese, through their very creative and engaging relationships. Parents are actively encouraged to share in the mission of the school, through participation in a variety of school events. The school openly welcomes the views of parents, and as one parent commented to the inspector, 'this is an amazing place.' The recent parental survey demonstrates this by the overwhelmingly 'strongly/agree' outcome across all areas surveyed. A typical positive response is 'St. Eugene's welcomes my son every morning. It makes him feel special and I leave him knowing he is going to have a great day of learning.' As part of the school's partnership with other local schools, St. Eugene's demonstrates exemplary ways in which they empower 'human flourishing.' The school actively participates in the range of services offered by the diocese. As part of the school's innovative partnerships with two other schools, the school offers excellent models of outstanding practice for governors, leaders and staff. The partnership of the three schools is further supported by its local deanery and wider diocesan links and networks. The school is also fully committed to ecumenical links with one of its partner schools, an Anglican primary school, and its extended links through this for highly effective professional development opportunities and sharing excellent practice.

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

Grade I

St Eugene's demonstrates outstanding effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school. This is exemplified in the way the partnership across the three schools is effectively utilised to grow leadership, secure succession planning and share models of excellent practice. The leadership team, with the governing body, through their high levels of expertise, demonstrate a clear understanding of their ecclesial mission in the church. The executive headteacher during her discussion with the inspector referred to how the community becomes the 'face of Christ' as the pupils are guided and encouraged to live out their mission statement daily. She sees the role of the school is in building the 'inner strength and dignity' of the pupils and staff, whilst not undermining the high expectations and aspirations for all to aspire to excellence. The chair of governors, the governor for religious education and the Catholic life of the school and the parish priest, explained to inspectors their key role and responsibility in carrying out the church's ecclesial mission. The head of school is inspiring the school community to implement and develop the agreed strategies identified in their robust and accurate school self-evaluation. The determination to sustain the Catholic ethos and vision of the school, which is woven through all aspects of the daily life of the school, is recognised by the governing body as 'its measure' for the whole community to sustain its outstanding practice.

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

- Empower pupils to plan, prepare and lead celebration of year group Masses and special liturgical celebrations.