

St.Mary's Catholic Primary School

East Row, North Kensington, London W10 5A

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 11 November 2016



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is good

- Good systems are in place to track the progress over time.
- Governors are very supportive of the school and pro-actively involved.
- Typicality of teaching overall is rarely less than good.
- Pupils are well engaged and enjoy their learning in religious education.
- Leaders are accurately evaluating the quality of the religious education presented to the pupils.
- The governing body generously resource religious education as for other core subjects, which has resulted in an attractive, safe and engaging environment in which to learn.
- Pupils can articulate their learning and theological thinking.

Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- The high quality of pupils' oral responses in their lessons is not evidenced in their sustained pieces of writing in religious education.
- Leaders have identified the need to ensure that all strands within the levels of attainment are covered across the phases.
- In all year groups, there are pupils who do not always accurately link the theology under-pinning their learning; this is particularly true in the older classes.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- Pupils are offered high quality worship and prayer, central to the daily life of the school, within the liturgical cycle, which includes scheduled opportunities for receiving the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation.
- Pupils are articulate, confident and demonstrate exemplary behaviour, in class and around the school.
- Pupils' understanding of the call to human flourishing is embedded and pupils can demonstrate this in discussion about their stewardship and responsibilities as young Catholics.
- Pupil commitment to fundraising and their understanding of the reasons behind their innovative ideas, are well supported and encouraged by all staff in the school.
- The newly formed leadership team, for religious education and the Catholic life of the school, has a strong, and passionate commitment and vision for school improvement.
- The governing body selflessly give their time and energy to ensuring the school improvement agenda is strategically implemented, within their ecclesial commitment to the mission of the Church.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school is now using child-friendly attainment targets to inform their marking comments and assessment procedures. Pupils are leading their own class worship. They recognise the need to link assessment to future planning, to achieve higher levels of attainment across the school.

The content of classroom religious education is good

The school has mapped out its scheme of work to meet the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. It has now introduced supplementary programmes to enhance the development of content at a deeper level, in particular developing effective links to scripture. The leader of religious education has identified how the structure of the current scheme of work needs to be developed and supplemented, to ensure higher attainment from their starting points for all pupils, as they progress through the key stages. There is evidence of a high quality and stimulating use of creativity and art, in particular in the school public areas and on display.

Pupil achievement in religious education is good

The overall achievement of pupils in religious education is good. Having analysed the impact of the current scheme of work, the school leadership team has recognised the need to supplement it, in order to challenge pupils to achieve the higher levels of attainment. They have utilised their network partnerships across the deanery, sharing models of excellent practice, in planning effective programmes, including the coverage of all the strands within the levels of attainment in Year 6. This has already resulted in more effective progress, as evident in the Year 6 scrutiny and lesson observations. Their evaluation and analysis have also identified the need for planning for finer differentiation to meet the needs of pupils assessed at different starting points. There is evidence in the data that pupils identified with SEND achieve generally in line with their peers and on occasions exceed. The sources of revelation are also being combined with further opportunities for deeper understanding of the theology underpinning the areas of learning within each topic. This includes the impact of how, by supplementing the scheme of work for the upper Key Stage 2, the pupils are actively developing their skills, knowledge and understanding in scripture, thus making effective links to their everyday experiences. The leadership team in RE has recognised the next stage of development is to ensure that the lower Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 1 schemes are planned accordingly, for effective attainment for all pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

The quality of teaching overall is good, though variable across the key stages. Very good teaching was observed where pupils are effectively challenged to think and reason, especially making links between theology and everyday life, such as exploring baptism in relation to the role of godparents. These lessons included opportunities for developing higher order thinking skills so promoting a better depth of knowledge and understanding and for finding the sources of revelation within certain texts from scripture and from life experiences today. The scrutiny of the work in the books showed an over-reliance on worksheets. In some classes observed, the role of the other adults in their learning is on occasions passive and some lessons are not adequately matched to the levels of ability. There are some opportunities for teachers to probe children's awareness and understanding of the theology behind the concepts being explored. There needs to be more opportunities planned for pupils to complete more of the tasks within the lesson, with evidence of too much teacher talk, which denied pupils the opportunity to extend their learning. In Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) there needs to be more opportunities for writing in religious education. In these lessons there was no evidence of the children being supported and guided towards a greater depth of learning, for

example in the topic of baptism. This also applied to pupil progress through the key stages. The school has developed a range of quality home and school projects from EYFS to the end of Key Stage 2, such as the canonisation of St. Teresa of Calcutta, the rosary, (especially as Our Lady is their patron), and the research by all pupils of their house saints.

The leadership and management of religious education

are good

The school has formed a team approach of leaders for religious education. The leadership of RE has a vision and determination for excellence. This includes its openness to embracing strategies from other leaders, through partnerships from models of excellent practice across the deanery of schools. They attend relevant deanery and diocesan training and embrace network opportunities. The team ensure a representative attends all diocesan and deanery training and network opportunities. Leaders have recognised that the tracking and assessment procedures have identified gaps in pupil attainment and as a result, they have begun to implement a system that will allow them to record all of the attainment strands to ensure effective coverage.

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

- EYFS to provide more opportunities for writing in religious education
- Adults to develop the use of more planned open questioning, in order to challenge the more able
- Pupils to have more opportunities within the lesson to develop their thoughts, responses and ideas in writing as appropriate
- Leaders to ensure the full coverage of the strands in the levels of attainment

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pupils are now leading class worship on a weekly basis across the phases. There is also evidence in the portfolios of a range of pupil-centred celebration and worship.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

The school fully meets the 10% of curriculum time as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The centrality of faith is woven through all aspects of the curriculum and the relationships across the school community. The governing body generously funds the provision for religious education and the Catholic life of the school, in line with other core areas. There is a range of high quality resources, including ICT, which is provided to enhance the learning in religious education across all year groups. There is evidence that a full range of liturgies, assemblies and class worship are well planned and accessible for all pupils.

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

is outstanding

The class prayer books on display, the high quality prayer corners in all classes and the assembly observed during the inspection, provide evidence that prayer and worship are central to St. Mary's. Children are encouraged to write their own prayers and this is evident in their prayer journals and R.E. books. Pupils are actively involved in planning and leading class worship, using the diocesan model, on a regular basis. The exploration of other faiths is well embedded across the school and there is evidence for example, of how pupils considered the celebration of Diwali. The parents and governors are welcomed to all liturgies and celebrations. Children and pupils are confident to pause, reflect and pray spontaneously through the ready access they have to their prayer gardens. An excellent example of this was when, during the learning walk, the inspector was shown the facility available to the pupils and children to 'phone' Our Blessed Lady to "chat to her." The role play opportunities in the EYFS are worthy of note, in particular the 'church' which children used very effectively. The outside area in the EYFS has many creative opportunities for children to explore and in particular the 'prayer garden,' which children readily access. The colourful and detailed portfolio provides evidence of ongoing high quality events in the Catholic life of the school, such as special liturgical assemblies and the valuable contribution of the parish sister, which nurtures the human flourishing of children and pupils across the phases.

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

are outstanding

The overall commitment and contribution to the Common Good and social justice are outstanding. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and are able to describe their responsibility to the wider community. They elaborated on their work for supporting Mary's Meals, CAFOD, operation Christmas Child, Catholic Children's Society and the NSPCC, as areas where they have had ownership on the fundraising. Behaviour in classes and across the school and playground is exemplary, where pupils are well mannered, articulate and confident. They know exactly what to do and whom they should go to, when they feel in any way unsafe. Pupils value the work of the school council as an instrument of pupil voice. There is some evidence of pupils, for example in Year 6, who are beginning to have a grasp of the theology underpinning their understanding of the value of meeting the needs of those less well off than themselves, locally, nationally and internationally. The gifts and talents of the pupils across the phases are celebrated, for example weekly in the assembly

observed during the inspection and shared on the school website for access to the school stakeholders.

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

is outstanding

The school has worked in close partnership with the diocese, its advisors and officers, to secure recruitment of the recently appointed headteacher. This has also included the strategies being employed, seeking guidance on matching their levels of attainment in religious education. The parents who met the inspector were glowing regarding the nurture, support and guidance offered by the school staff across the phases, particularly for those pupils with significant special educational needs. The governing body are pro-actively and strategically guiding the school team to meet the identified priorities. Their more recent robust structure of the 'strategy groups,' which include representations of the staff holding responsibility areas, has impacted upon a range of school improvement issues, most particularly in the delivery of religious education and the celebration of the liturgical cycle in the Catholic life of the school. The school has developed home, school and parish links, including the parental involvement with the pupils being set interesting homework projects, such as researching the saints, and the rosary.

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

is outstanding

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The members of the senior team, over recent years, have demonstrated a clear commitment and dedication to moving the school forward. They are pro-actively implementing a range of strategies to embed and develop key areas for high quality provision and for excellence in all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. The governing body, through its strategic approach, is ensuring that the highest quality Catholic education is integral to their ecclesial mission of the Church. They have supported and guided the school through a series of changes and demands over recent years. This is demonstrated by the generous time the governing body dedicate for full and rigorous involvement in the day to day learning activities, evaluations and analysis. The result is that governors, including the parish priest and parish sister, have a depth of understanding of their school that is robust, enabling them to impact upon their range of improvement over recent times. This has empowered a collaborative approach across all aspects of the school, as St. Mary's moves forward on its continuous journey, of 'learning together in faith and love'.

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

- Pupils to be empowered to plan, prepare and lead liturgies and Masses, as appropriate
- Maintain the centrality of prayer in the life of all in the community across the liturgical cycle

Information about this school

- The school is a two form entry Catholic primary school in the locality of East Row.
- The school serves the parishes of Holy Souls, Kensal Row.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 73.1%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 15.6% and from other faiths is 3.6%. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 71%.
- There are 19% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 5 have statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic 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.
- 177 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (52%).

Department for Education Number	207 3542
Unique Reference Number	100499
Local Authority	Kensington and Chelsea

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	341
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr. Max de Lotbiniere
Headteacher	Miss Joan Harte
Telephone number	020 8969 0321
Website	www
Email address	info@st-marys.rbkc.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 th July 2011
Grade from previous inspection	Outstanding

Information about this inspection

This inspection was carried out (i) under the requirements of the Canon 806 and (ii) in accordance with the Framework for Diocesan Inspections 2015 approved by the Archbishop of Westminster and (iii) under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

- The inspectors would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection.
- During the inspection number lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with school staff, pupils and governors.
- Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents.

Inspection Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Mrs Tina Cleugh

Mrs Evelyn Ward

Miss Grace Anderson

Lead Inspector

Associate Inspector

Associate Inspector

Diocesan inspection has four grades:

- outstanding
- good
- requires improvement
- causing concern

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