

St Charles Catholic Primary School

83 St Charles Square, London W10 6EB

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 27 June 2018



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is good

- Pupils are offered an exciting, creative education in religious education which engages them and helps them do well.
- The scheme of work is mapped to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory and ensures that this is the basis of its teaching.
- Drama, art and especially music enhance the learning opportunities throughout the school.
- Pupils receive a firm grounding in Bible stories and Gospel values from the moment they start school; Early Years Foundation Stage children are very eager to contribute to lessons.
- Religious education is firmly rooted as a core subject with great care given to the collecting of evidence in pupils' work, classroom and school displays and in the teacher files.
- The school takes moderation very seriously and it is carried out effectively within school and in deanery and diocese.
- Most pupils have begun to understand how to evaluate their work and what they need to do to improve it.
- Governors are involved in the school and have a good understanding of the priorities for improvement.
- Teachers plan effectively to meet the various needs of the pupils and use differentiation to meet their needs, especially those with additional needs.

Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- While there are examples of very good practice, there is not yet a consistency across classes and key stages in challenge for the more able and marking.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- This is a vibrant school, fully living out the school mission statement 'Love God, love your neighbour'.
- Religious education is allocated its full 10% of teaching time as required by the Bishops' Conference and resourced well.
- From nursery onwards, pupils are involved in the planning and delivery of liturgies and value this role.
- The pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school and are proud to show it off to visitors.
- The facilities such as the Sacred Heart chapel and Our Lady's rose garden, support the pupils in their prayer life and provide places of reflection throughout the day.
- The school chaplaincy team is a highly effective group who plan and monitor religious education through the school and regularly meet with the religious education leader and parish priest.
- All pupils are fully committed to the Common Good and see how this is lived out in their lives and the lives of others they help. They are able to suggest charities which they feel they should support.
- The school has acted this mission out in the way its community has supported each other following the fire at Grenfell Tower.
- The school is full of relevant iconography and displays which enhance the environment and provide pupils with a constant reminder of our Catholic faith.
- The call to human flourishing is clear in the many opportunities the pupils are offered and can clearly be seen in the highly talented choir and orchestra.
- Leadership at all levels ensures that the Catholic life of this school is outstanding.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

In the last inspection, the school was asked to develop marking by giving pupils opportunities to make suggested improvements to their work. This is evidenced in the books throughout the school, where pupils often respond to comments made by their teachers. The school was also asked to continue to monitor planning and assessments to ensure full coverage of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD). This is also now in place.

The content of classroom religious education is good

The school has mapped the scheme of work it uses against the RECD and ensured that this is the basis of its teaching. Where needed, other resources are used to ensure that there is full coverage and enough depth for more able learners. Pupils are given a wide range of creative learning opportunities in their lessons which include art, drama and music to a very high standard. In EYFS, children were keen to act out the story of The Good Samaritan, discussing the actions of the characters as they did so. There is a high level of engagement by pupils in all lessons. Pupils in Year 2 could hardly contain their excitement at sharing treasure in a 'treasure box.' Lessons are well resourced; Bibles are available for pupils to access texts individually and other resources were ready and of good quality. Other faiths are taught as part of the scheme of work and these are supported by visits to other local places of worship. In keeping with the creative approach to religious education (RE), pupils made Challah bread during their study of Judaism.

Pupil achievement in religious education is good

The school has focused on the way it measures progress and attainment in RE and has recently re-designed its tracking systems to make monitoring of this more efficient. Pupils with additional needs make good progress and are supported by differentiated work and appropriate one-to-one support where necessary. More able pupils are now being more clearly identified and questioning is used to develop their understanding in class, as well as discrete teaching of groups at the top end of the school. The evidence shows that achievement Level 5 at Key Stage 2 this year will be more in line with that of other core subjects. Similar improvements can be seen at Key Stage 1. This now needs to be a focus for each class and year group to ensure that each child makes as much progress as they can, each year. Pupils show good religious literacy and are able to call on their knowledge of Jesus' teaching and The Ten Commandments to support their arguments and discussion. In Year 6, pupils were able to use the school motto 'Love God, love your neighbour' to explain why we should support the hospice movement. The variety of creative approaches to RE gives all the pupils a chance to engage and enjoy their learning, which is clearly seen in the excellent behaviour for learning evident from Nursery to Year 6. The school uses 'stepping stones' to break down the Levels of Attainment for the pupils. These are shared clearly in each lesson and help the pupils to see how they can succeed and challenge themselves to achieve more. The school participates fully in deanery and diocesan moderation and all staff have examples of moderated work in their class files in order to inform their own judgments.

The quality of teaching is good

Teachers plan and deliver lessons which are pitched appropriately for their pupils and engage their interest with the result that most are achieving well over time. They show good subject knowledge and have created environments where pupils are comfortable to take part in discussions about their faith. In Year 6, a discussion on 'Has society lost sight of God?' was able to address many of the real life experiences of the pupils, including the ongoing effects of the fire at Grenfell Tower.

There is a consistent approach to lessons, with all classes using a set format for learning objectives and 'stepping stones'. This familiarity means that pupils all know what is expected of them, and supports staff who are new to the teaching of RE. Staff are well supported by the senior team, particularly the RE coordinator, who makes sure that standards in RE remain high, despite the recent high turnover of staff. Senior leaders act swiftly to work with members of staff who may need extra support in delivering the RE curriculum. Training in RE is given high priority and this is reflected in the work of the pupils. Teaching meets the need of the pupils and questioning is used to move them forward in their thinking. Pupils also complete homework which feeds into their class work; Year 3 pupils researched different places of pilgrimages as part of their topic on "special places".

The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting religious education

is outstanding

The leaders of the school have a clear and well-communicated vision for RE in the school which is shared by all members of the school community. It is at the heart of the curriculum and informs all other areas of school life. Supported by the whole leadership team and governors, the RE coordinator has set in place systems and procedures which ensure that the standards in RE are as high as they can be. That these standards are still high given the high turnover of staff shows the importance given to this work by the school. The coordinator has ensured that all staff receive relevant training, calling on the diocese and other experts to help in this. Approximately 20% of professional development time is given to RE. Support is put in place for staff who need it. The school Self-Evaluation Form presents a very clear and accurate picture of where the school is now and what it needs to do to achieve outstanding in classroom RE. The leadership team has shown a constant willingness to make changes when they will improve the outcomes in classroom RE for the pupils and, given some stability with staffing, there would seem to be no reason why these should not embed over the next few years.

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

- To continue the work already begun in providing stretch and challenge for more able pupils throughout the school.
- To continue to support new members staff though high quality professional development and in-school support

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection the school has implemented an annual questionnaire of Key Stage 2 pupils, which is fed back into school planning. The data from this is overwhelmingly positive.

In order to improve the pupils planning, preparation and leadership of class collective worship, the school has set up a chaplaincy team, which not only leads class worship but can lead whole school worship and liturgies in the parish church.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

Religious education is at the heart of this school. Not content with allocating it a full 10% of teaching time and resourcing it fully, the school community lives out the school motto 'Love God, love your neighbour' in the relationships they show with each other and with the wider community. The school makes all aspects of Catholic life relevant to the pupils of the school. For example, the pupils researched Mother Teresa, looking at her visit to the school in 1997 when she shared a special prayer for Mary with them. They also follow the Pope on Twitter, studying one of his tweets each week. Displays around the school illustrate miracles from the gospels with work by the pupils and other displays reflect Catholic traditions such as the Stations of the Cross. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the Catholic life of the school and agree its centrality. They appreciate the links which are formed and particularly mention the 'Wednesday Word' which they feel helps parents support their pupils at home. Governors are kept well informed of all aspects of the Catholic life of the school and are able to access training both in the school and from the diocese.

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

is outstanding

An extensive range of prayer and worship activities are presented to staff and pupils during the school year. From Nursery onwards, children act as 'prayer leaders', leading daily prayer and planning class acts of worship to a high level. This practice is clearly embedded and is carried out with a high degree of reverence, showing the respect the pupils have for each other. All classes have well-presented prayer areas which often include prayer by the pupils and their families. The 'chaplaincy group' is a wonderful embodiment of the part played by prayer in the life of the school. Its members apply for their roles and make a significant contribution to the school. Their redevelopment of the outside prayer area was in direct response to the pupil questionnaire which highlighted that pupils did not use the area as much as they could. They painted gospel values on the bricks used in the garden. Our Lady's rose garden provides pupils and staff with a quiet space to pray the rosary. The group meets weekly with the deputy head teacher and visit the parish church to discuss liturgies with the parish priest. Links with the parish church are further developed through the shared preparation of pupils for the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The school values its staff and recognises that they also need time for prayer and reflection. They organise and fully fund a day retreat each year which all members of staff attend. The recently redesigned school website bears witness to the prayer life of the school through its account of the Catholic life of the school.

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

is outstanding

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to examine their role in the school and wider community. The school has a wide range of charities which it supports, and many of them are suggested by the pupils themselves; one child raised over £2000 donating hair to the 'Little Princess

Trust'. The school supports many national organisations such as the Catholic Children's Society, taking the chance to join with other schools to celebrate the work of these charities, and global charities like Mary's Meals. The school has a particular regard to its own community and has done extensive work supporting those in the community who are still affected by the fire at nearby Grenfell Tower. Harvest celebrations provide hampers and supermarket vouchers which the parish is able to hand out to those who need them. The superb choir and orchestra take part in many events on a national scale, such as the 'Excellence in Music' awards, but still perform at Christmas in the local hospice and for the Carmelite Sisters. Pupils show their understanding of the call to serve through their readiness to contribute to the chaplaincy team, the choir and orchestra in their own time.

The partnership with parents, school and parish, and collaboration as an integral part of the diocese through its relationship with the diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf

is outstanding

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, as evidenced in their responses to the inspection questionnaire. There are many occasions for them to join with the school and the school looks to support those families who may need additional support for example, through the 'Achievement for All' programme. There are strong links with the parish church of St Pius X and the parish priest serves as RE link governor on the governing body, adding to the development of RE in the school. The choir has sung at many services at the church, including those attended by the Cardinal and Bishop. Bishop John Wilson made a visit to the school following the Grenfell disaster, helping the pupils to appreciate that they are supported by the wider church. Full use is made of diocesan training for all staff and governors. The school works with the rest of the deanery group and was instrumental in restarting the deanery staff Masses.

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

is outstanding

School leaders and governors have created a community which is immersed in the school motto. It underpins every decision made and permeates every part of the school. There is a clear message of mission to every member of the community, inviting everyone to give the best they have to develop the common good for others and giving them the support they need to achieve this. This includes staff, governors, parents and pupils. This sense of community links all members, past and present, with the portrait of 'Mater Admirabilis' as a reminder of the original founders, The Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Every opportunity is taken to offer the pupils the experiences to enrich their Catholic way of living, and the pupils accept these opportunities and excel in them. The head is ably supported by the senior leadership team and governors in providing for the pupils in their care a vibrant, Catholic community.

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

- The school has established a highly effective model of pupil leadership and should actively promote this as a model for other primary school

Information about this school

- The school is a 1.5 form entry Catholic primary school in the locality of North Kensington.
- The school serves the parishes of St Pius X, St Charles Square, St Aiden's, East Acton and the Parish of the Transfiguration, Kensal Rise.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 88%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 9 % and from other faiths is 1 %. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 67 %.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 1.
- There are 14% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 8 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.
- 124 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (40 %).

Department for Education Number	207/5201
Unique Reference Number	100505
Local Authority	Royal Borough of 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	315
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Simon Enright
Headteacher	Miss Ann Slavin
Telephone number	020 8969 5566
Website	www.st-charles.rbkc.sch.uk
Email address	info@st-charles.rbkc.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 November 2012
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	Good
The Catholic life of the school	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 7 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 2 acts of worship.
- 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 Grades

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Causing concern

Inspection Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

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Mrs Mary Ainger
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