



Diocese of Westminster

The Annunciation Catholic Junior School

The Meads, Burnt Oak, Edgware HA8 9HQ

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DFE Number: 302 3514

URN Number: 101342

Headteacher: Mrs M. McManus

Chair of Governors: Mr G. Nnochiri

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: 8th November 2013

Date of previous inspection: 4th February 2008

Reporting Inspector: Mrs P Brannigan

Associate Inspectors: Ms C Bryan & Ms J Mowat

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 eight lessons, attended one assembly and carried out six interviews 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.

The Inspection of The Annunciation Catholic Junior School, Burnt Oak 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 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.

Description of School

The school is a two form entry junior school in Burnt Oak, Edgware. The school serves the parish of The Annunciation, Burnt Oak but also accepts pupils from neighbouring parishes. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 99%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 1%.

There are 224 pupils on roll, with 4 pupils who have a statement 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 also above average. There is an average rate of families claiming free school meals.

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1: Outstanding;*
Grade 1: Very Good;
Grade 2: Good;
Grade 3: Requires improvement;
Grade 4: Causing Concern.

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

Overall Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of curriculum religious education is good and meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory which forms the basis for the programmes of study, supported by the 'Year of Faith' units. The quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress are good. Pupils make good progress through the challenge and expectations of their teachers. Effective structures are in place to ensure good quality teaching and monitoring. Self-evaluation indicates a good knowledge of the school and the development areas for religious education. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and there are very good structures in place to support new members of staff. There is a commitment to on-going professional development to enable staff to improve and develop the teaching of religious education. The headteacher, deputy and subject leader, give religious education a high priority which permeates all aspects of the life of the school.

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

There were two areas for development in the last inspection report. The first was to continue the planned development of religious education using the new levels of attainment to set pupil targets and inform pupils what they need to do to improve. This area is currently under review in the light of the agreed understanding of the levels of attainment. The second was to undertake visits to places of worship of other faiths. Since then some pupils have visited a local synagogue and there are plans to visit the Hindu temple in Neasden.

To further improve classroom religious education in the light of the new framework, the school should:

- Continue to ensure that all staff have a sound grasp of the national levels of attainment (agreed understanding) and are enabled to use them for planning and assessment.
- Complete the portfolio of assessed work to help teachers when levelling work

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

Grade 2

The Curriculum Directory forms the basis of the content for religious education lessons. The four strands are clearly identified in lesson planning. The school is using the 'Year of Faith' units which are cross referenced to the areas of the Curriculum Directory being covered. Staff are well supported by the subject leader in their medium term planning. The subject leader identifies the links to the Curriculum Directory and supports new teachers as they identify appropriate resources. There is regular monitoring of the curriculum, planning, workbooks and pupil learning. There is evidence of planning to meet the needs of all groups of pupils by imaginative use of resources. To further improve the school should ensure that all teachers are familiar with the content of the curriculum directory and how the four strands link together.

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

Grade 2

Pupil achievement, attainment and progress in religious education are good. Pupils enter the school around the national average and make good progress across the key stage. This has been achieved by careful monitoring and tracking, an investment in resources, staff training and use of support staff. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards generally meet diocesan expectations. Lessons observed provided evidence of very well motivated pupils who are actively engaged in their own learning. Pupils take pride in their work. They respond well to their teachers' advice on how to improve. There is evidence that pupils are attaining a good standard in knowledge and understanding of religion and are developing an ability to reflect on meaning. Pupils would make further progress if they were encouraged to bring their own experiences to their learning and link them to their understanding of religious education.

The quality of teaching

Grade 2

The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection eight lessons were observed. The good teaching overall resulted in pupils being actively engaged in their learning. Good assessment procedures need to be further developed and this will enable teachers to plan well and meet pupils' varying needs. Where teaching was judged very good, the dynamic and creative approach enabled pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Behaviour in all classes was exemplary. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are able to inspire most pupils and enable them to become independent learners. There is evidence that many pupils are demonstrating their developing skills through a range of oral, illustrative and written outcomes. The school is fully committed to developing the religious literacy of all pupils through a range of activities which celebrate the purpose of their lives. In all reflections, which are a part of most religious education lessons, pupils demonstrated reverence and prayerfulness. Workbooks are well presented, marking is positive and sometimes includes questions to probe understanding and deepen knowledge. A range of cross-curricular activities including art, IT, and role-play are used to engage pupils in their learning. Seven teachers hold the CCRS certificate or equivalent. All teachers have good access to in-service training both in-house and provided by the Diocese.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade 1

The leadership and management of religious education is very good and has a positive impact on the life of the school. The experienced subject leader is very well supported by the headteacher, deputy and all staff. Together they ensure that the commitment to the educational mission of the Church is shared by the whole school community. The children's mission statement, 'Come Lord, and walk with me' is well known by pupils and often used in reflections. School leaders ensure that very good support is given to new teachers and teaching assistants. High expectations for staff and pupils ensure that religious education is at the core of the curriculum. Staff are very well supported in their teaching through in-service training and frequent continued professional development. The subject leader understands well the areas for development and knows what needs to be done to effect further improvements. Religious education is given priority in the school improvement plan which clearly identifies the areas for development and how they are to be achieved. There is a good range of resources and the learning environment for religious education is very good. Members of the governing body are knowledgeable and familiar with current developments in religious education which enables them to support the school.

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 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 school is very effective in developing pupils' experience in the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing. The leadership and vision of the headteacher, deputy and subject leader are instrumental in ensuring that worship and prayer are central to the life of the school and are well planned and resourced. Religious education is valued and recognised as the core of the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to reach their full potential academically, spiritually and morally by all staff. They are involved in the preparation of liturgies as well as given opportunities to become involved in social justice issues. The governing body includes members who have a very strong commitment to the school's vision of itself as a Catholic community. Good links with parents, parish and Diocese demonstrate the school's commitment to partnership and its clear identity as a diocesan Catholic school.

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

Since the last inspection the school has developed an outside prayer area which has given pupils increased opportunities for reflection and meditation, and is well used. Pupils have continued to be given opportunities to participate in school liturgies and class masses. All staff have been well supported as the school implements the new Diocesan Framework and the requirements of the Curriculum Directory.

To further develop the Catholic life of the school:

- Pupils should be given even greater opportunities to engage in the planning and preparation of prayer and worship.

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

Grade I

Religious education receives 10% of curriculum time and has a similar budget as other core subjects. Resources are very good and there is a very good learning environment through very attractive displays in classrooms and other areas of the school. Each classroom has a prayer table which is used as a focus during classroom prayers. School leadership offers strong support in developing and reviewing the quality of religious education. All staff receive in-service support and training relating to the Catholic life of the school. Members of the governing body are able to provide strong support in reviewing and developing the place of religious education. The priest from the local parish liaises with the school for a planned programme of masses and liturgies as well as visiting classrooms to support the teaching of religious education.

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

Grade I

The school's provision for prayer and worship is very good. Pupils are given opportunities for prayer, meditation and reflection within the Catholic tradition and examples were seen during the inspection. Pupils are enabled to participate and contribute to a wide range of worship and would welcome further opportunities to plan assemblies and liturgies. The liturgical year forms the basis for many of the prayer and worship opportunities. During the inspection an assembly on the theme of 'Remembrance' linked All Souls Day with Remembrance Sunday. Prayer, music and gospel readings were included and all pupils participated with respect, reverence and enthusiasm. Parents are invited to assemblies and liturgies and a number were able to attend. Religious education lessons often include prayers and end with a simple liturgy. Eucharistic celebrations are held in school, and the parish priest who is also a school governor, is a frequent visitor to school celebrations and events. He also visits classrooms to support pupils' understanding of aspects of their faith. Parish led sacramental preparation is supported by the school. Pupils are engaged in the preparation of liturgies and masses which are part of the school's provision. Spiritual development is nurtured through the whole curriculum and religious education which permeates the wider life of the school. In recent years a Dominican sister has visited to explore different styles of prayer and meditation with pupils. Almost 70% of families responded to the parental questionnaires which indicated that parents were very positive about all aspects of religious education and the Catholic life of the school.

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

Grade I

The school is inclusive and emphasises the uniqueness of each person. The need to value diversity and show respect for those from different backgrounds and cultures is demonstrated through the curriculum, particularly during 'Black History' month and when teaching about other faiths. The school has a very good understanding of the importance of service and support for those in need. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to support local and national charities including Cafod, Catholic Children's Society and the Passage, as well as raising funds to support a parish in Uganda. They support the local hospice and hospital by providing entertainment at Christmas. Conversations with members of the school council and older pupils indicate that they are given many opportunities to reflect on issues of justice in their own local community. Pupils are given opportunities to support each other through the school council and other responsibilities. All pupils are growing in their understanding that responding to the call to justice and service is part of being a member of a Catholic community. The school has identified that the formation of a Justice and Peace group will give pupils additional opportunities to understand the theology underpinning the Catholic approach to service and social justice.

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

Governors, headteacher and staff see partnership between parents, school and parish as a central part of the school's understanding of itself with its immediate and wider community. Parish links are very good and the school demonstrates its commitment to the community by preparing Sunday Mass once a month. Parishioners are invited to school for special events and pupils visit the church, which is some distance away, to deepen their faith and understanding. The school works closely with

parents and carers through meetings, newsletters and the 'Wednesday Word'. Questionnaires indicated that families are very appreciative of all that is done to enable their children to grow in faith. There are also very good links with the Diocese through participation in training offered through the Westminster Education Service for both staff and governors. Senior staff attend diocesan conferences and have participated in deanery and diocesan assessment sessions.

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

Grade I*

The leadership of the school is fully committed to the Church's mission in education and demonstrates this by providing a curriculum with spiritual and moral development at its heart. Headteacher, subject leader, governors, and senior staff ensure that the Catholic life of the school is central to all its work and this is reflected in its self-evaluation. Pupils are given many opportunities to know the life and teachings of Jesus and the traditions of the Catholic Church. Leaders share a vision of the nature of Catholic education and work with staff, pupils and families to move the school forward. All aspects of school life are underpinned by the mission statement. Each class has an attractive display area and prayer focus which emphasises the importance of religious education. Governors make a highly significant contribution to the work and Catholic dimension of the school. They have a clear understanding of their role in safeguarding and promoting the Catholic life of the school.



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A. Classroom Religious Education

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

Overall Grade 2

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

Grade 2

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

Grade 2

The quality of teaching

Grade 2

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade 1

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 1

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

Grade 1

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

Grade 1

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

Grade 1

The 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 1

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

Grade 1*