



Diocese of Westminster

St Raphael's Catholic Primary School
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DFE Number: 307/3508
URN Number: 101925

Headteacher: Mrs A. Staunton
Chair of Governors: Mrs S. Osmond

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: 1st February 2013
Date of previous inspection: March 2008

Reporting Inspector: Mrs M. Betts

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 11 lessons and one liturgy, and carried out 3 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 Raphael's Catholic Primary School, Northolt 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 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 school gradually changing to a three form entry in the LA of Ealing and the locality of Northolt. The school serves the parishes of St Raphael, Yeading; and St Bernard, Northolt. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 98%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 1% and from other Faiths 1%.

There are 518 pupils on roll, with 15 pupils with statements of Special Educational Need. 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 below 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: [1]

The inspector concurs with the school's self-evaluation judgement. Pupils are gaining religious literacy at a very good rate. They are becoming aware of how their Catholic faith affects their daily living. Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons especially when discussing their own ideas and opinions and when undertaking practical activities to consolidate their learning such as art appreciation, drama, and internet research. Pupils display a growing depth of thought which impacts very well on their spiritual and moral development. All staff are fully committed to the very high profile given to religious education and willing to undertake training to improve their skills. There is evidence of very good imaginative planning of learning. Lessons have clear objectives and success criteria, these enabling pupils to effectively assess their own learning. The school's accurate self-evaluation achieved, through regular monitoring, provides evidence of very good awareness of RE strengths and needs.

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

The inspection issue from the last inspection has been fully achieved. The school has clear assessment tracking records linked to National Attainment levels.

To further improve in curriculum religious education the school has identified the following areas and the inspector concurs with these:

To achieve higher RE levels for a larger proportion of the older pupils by planning teaching and tasks for them to be able to achieve level 5 outcomes.

To enhance the learning of other faiths' teaching so that the RE programme links more closely to all aspects of the Curriculum Directory.

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

Grade [1]

The school has mapped their religious education programme to the four areas of the Curriculum Directory. Together with the programme's writer, they linked each area with year groups and topics. Additionally, they have devised links to their Early Years RE programme. Teachers plan their topics highlighting the areas of the Curriculum Directory to be covered and specify the links on their lesson plans. The school recognises the need to monitor and evaluate coverage and resources. They have already noted gaps in the RE programme particularly covering other faiths' beliefs and have firm plans to remedy this. There is evidence of very good imaginative planning of learning and resources to make these relevant to the ages and abilities of the pupils, as seen in the Reception classes using drama with props to learn about one of Jesus' healing miracles.

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

Grade [1]

Pupils are gaining a knowledge and understanding of religious literacy at a very good rate. The standard of attainment is in line with national expectations. The school is implementing strategies that are impacting on raising attainment exemplified by pupils now being aware of their current

attainment level and knowing what they need to do to improve. Pupils display a growing depth of thought which impacts very well on their spiritual and moral development. This was seen by year 6 pupils' responses to the challenging question as to how God can be said to be good if evil is present in the world. Their replies evidenced mature and knowledgeable consideration and ideas. Teachers are devising oral assessments to ensure accessibility to all ages. To confirm accuracy of judgements teachers moderate the assessments internally and externally with other schools in the Deanery. Pupils RE books are very well presented, showing full curriculum coverage with a good range of written activities.

The quality of teaching

Grade [1]

Teaching is very good overall and many outstanding aspects were observed. Teachers use visual material, open questioning, highlighting of key vocabulary and Scripture very effectively to engage pupils' interest and enhance learning. Links to Catholic tradition enrich pupils' understanding, such as the comparison of the events during the feeding of the 5000 to the parts of the Mass. Prayer and reflection during lessons focus very effectively pupils' thoughts on the learning. For example Year 5 children after learning about Mother Teresa, reflected on how they could show similar qualities of faith in their lives today. Pupils were fully engaged during lessons and their behaviour is excellent. Tasks were differentiated well and extra support given when needed. Marking is thorough with appropriate praise and added improvement suggestions.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade [1]

The leadership of religious education is very good and well supported by the headteacher and governors. The religious education subject leader has a clear, enthusiastic vision and guides and supports staff very well. The school's accurate self-evaluation provides evidence of very good awareness of RE strengths and needs and action plans for improvement are implemented. The school supports and undertakes training when monitoring shows there is a need. For example, teachers of the older pupils have undertaken diocesan training related to challenging pupils to achieve a higher level. This work is impacting on raised standards. Six teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) and three hold other Catholic qualifications. All Key Stage 2 pupils each receive a personal copy of the Bible.

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 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*]

This is an outstanding Catholic school. The committed leadership of the headteacher and senior staff is instrumental in effectively maintaining and developing the school's Catholic identity, and in powerfully fostering pupils' growing awareness of their Catholic faith and their understanding of how to live this out in their lives. Prayer, worship and sacramental celebration have a strong central role in school. The pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding and this is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes. Governors offer strong support in developing and reviewing the quality of religious education. Relationships within the school community are outstanding as is the pastoral care provided to support individual needs.

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

There were no development issues in this aspect of the last inspection report. Since then the school has increased Mass and worship opportunities.

To further improve the school's Catholic life the following area has been identified and the inspector concurs with this:

To embed into regular school practice the involvement of pupils in planning and leading their own acts of worship and class liturgies.

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

Grade [1*]

Religious education is of paramount importance in the school evidenced by the subject receiving at least 10% of curriculum time; by its extremely high budget which exceeds that of other core subject; and by the school's encouragement and support of teachers to undertaking extra RE training. Governors offer strong support in developing and reviewing the quality of religious education. Pupils are very aware of the importance of religious education knowing its high profile is because of its link to the Church and their lives as Catholics.

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

Grade [1]

Worship and prayer are integral parts of each school day and this, along with reflection and sharing ideas in discussions, make a strong impact on pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils are offered many various worship experiences throughout the liturgical year, for example the school and parish communities gather together to celebrate St Raphael's feast day. Mass is celebrated regularly

in class and at the church with the whole school. The parish priest makes a significant contribution to the sacramental life of the school. During the inspection Year 3 pupils very reverently led a Candlemas liturgy. They had contributed ideas to its planning. The school is beginning to encourage pupils to become more actively involved in devising their own liturgies and worship. Pupils are respectful during worship and participate with sincerity. The high quality of singing powerfully enriches the experience.

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

Grade [1*]

Pupils understand extremely well that a vital part of their Catholic faith is reaching out in love to others. They explained they follow Jesus' teaching and ensure common good for all by respecting people equally and working to restore balance in our world. Pupils raise money for many diverse charities both locally, nationally and globally where they support 10 children in an Ethiopian school. This is one means, pupils explained, of being able to increase others' life opportunities. Governors have recently undertaken Catholic social teaching training and now understand fully why the school has a very strong emphasis on promoting the Common Good. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and enthusiastically undertake a variety of responsibilities such as assisting younger pupils with reading. Pupils explained that forgiveness and awarding second chances to others are important values in the school's community life. Relationships within the school community are outstanding as is the pastoral care provided to support individual needs.

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 [1*]

The school works in close partnership with the diocese and welcomes diocesan advice and training. Pupils attend diocesan events and staff contribute extensively to deanery meetings. The school has responded with a firm commitment to diocesan requests that will benefit other Catholic schools such as the headteacher supporting a less experienced Catholic head, and also by a teacher secondment to deputy role in another diocesan school. The school has outstanding links with parents who are extremely supportive. Parents greatly value the contribution the school makes to the faith development of their children. This is borne out through the very high number of parents (89%) agreeing and strongly agreeing with all aspects of the school's RE and Catholic provision. The school has very strong links with the parish and the parish priests are frequent visitors.

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

Grade [1*]

The school leaders are powerfully committed to the Church's mission in education and in providing for pupils' faith and individual needs. They have a extremely clear vision and mission statement that underpins all aspects of the school's daily life and engage all staff and pupils in dedication to fulfil this. Pupils' "Big Faith" queries are answered through an outstanding and innovative forum, sometimes involving the priest in supplying answers. The Catholic identity of the school is pivotal to school life and this is evidenced by the extremely high quality of the faith and RE displays, many featuring pupils' learning outcomes. The school provides retreat days for staff. The prayer garden is available for pupils' quiet reflection. The leadership understands very well the school's strengths and development needs through their thorough and accurate self-evaluation. Governors are supportive and well informed about the work 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 [1]

How well does the content of classroom religious education meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory?	Grade [1]
Pupil achievement (as well as attainment and progress) in religious education	Grade [1]
The quality of teaching	Grade [1]
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*]